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The People of the Word—Poems — MARK VAN DOREN

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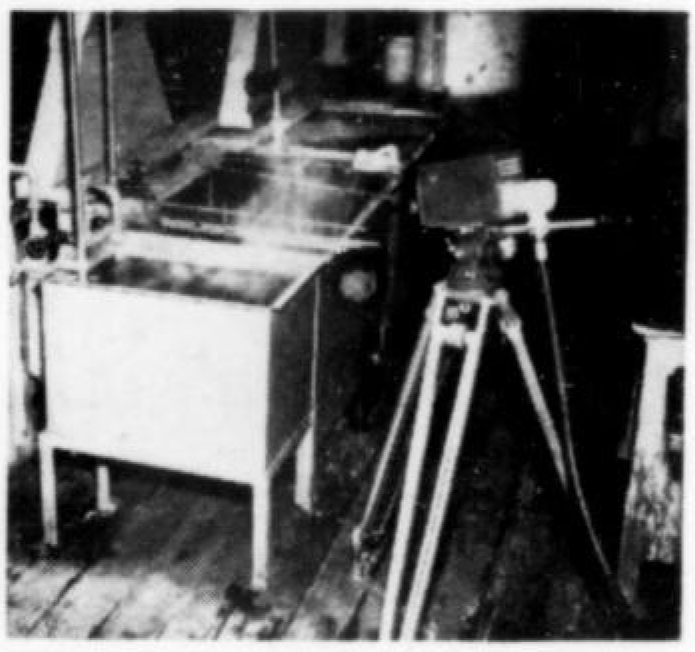

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

The Defense of Europe
Herbert Lüthy

France and other countries of Western Europe are engaged in deciding—each in terms of its own national psychology and internal politics—whether they will defend themselves against the Soviet threat—and how. By the author of "France's Homeless Left" (August 1950).

"Positive Judaism" and Self-Hatred
Clement Greenberg

"Assimilationists," we have heard endlessly, are motivated by self-hatred and feelings of inferiority—but it should also be realized that there may be more than a little of the same unhappy impulse behind much recent intemperate talk and name-calling that passes as "positive" and "affirmative" Judaism. At least, so Clement Greenberg suggests, in a provocative essay.

Freedom for Radio-TV?
Joseph Wood Krutch

Many intelligent people once viewed the invention of the printing press as an unmitigated calamity. History has not quite conformed to their fearful premonitions. Can an analogy be drawn between the printing press and radio and television? Or do the latter introduce new—and more perplexing—dilemmas of freedom and control for those concerned with the possible wholesale corruption of the popular mind by mass-produced propaganda and vulgarity?

Does Psychoanalysis Cure?
Lillian Blumberg

Recent months have seen the beginning of serious questioning, both inside and outside the profession, of the status of psychoanalysis, as science and as therapy. Lillian Blumberg reviews recent literature in the scientific journals and elsewhere bearing on the subject.

Homes in the Homeland
Charles Abrams

For Israel's immigrants, the promised land has in most cases meant only another crowded temporary camp. A housing expert, recently returned from Israel, discusses the present grave housing crisis and how the new state plans to meet it.

National Character, Tensions, and Peace
Morroe Berger

Not so long ago, it was most unfashionable to speak of "national character"; people were all the same and only circumstances differed—all else was reactionary mystification. More recently, however, in an attempt to get at the root of prevailing international tensions, there has been a great burst of renewed interest in national character, and social scientists have been hard at work in the field. Mr. Berger scrutinizes the findings of many of these recent studies of national character, and analyzes their implications. In the department "The Study of Man."

COMMENTARY

BIG CITY MACHINES AND LIBERAL VOTERS

Need We Throw the Bosses Out?

IRWIN ROSS

THREE years ago, during the initial agitation over the Taft-Hartley Act, New York City's Mayor William O'Dwyer proclaimed an official, city-wide day of protest against the measure. O'Dwyer's action was without precedent in New York's long history. He was denounced by conservatives and applauded by labor—with the fondness reserved for "one of our own." Indeed, O'Dwyer could hardly have done more for the unions' cause had he been a labor or socialist mayor on the European model. Instead, he was, of course, a Tammany man—the nominee of the oldest, and at times the most malodorous, political machine in America.

LAST month, the American public was treated to an illuminating display of the earthy intricacies of machine politics in connection with the Democratic nominations in New York City and State. But above and beyond the bickering, negotiations, and high strategy, one fact was clear from the outset: the Democratic platform would be a militantly liberal one and Mr. Flynn and his associates would finally have to choose from among candidates at least publicly friendly to the Fair Deal and organized labor. What would Lincoln Steffens have made of this?—what has happened to urban political machines since he wrote *The Shame of the Cities?* Is the social liberalism of the bosses mere tactical opportunism—or does it represent a new political actuality? It is these and similar questions that IRWIN ROSS here tries to answer. Mr. Ross is the author of *Strategy for Liberals* (Harper, 1949) and of numerous articles in *Harper's, Reader's Digest,* and other periodicals. He was born in Chicago in 1919 and was graduated from Harvard in 1940.

Politics, we know, makes for strange bedfellows. But the present spectacle of the bosses in the ward clubs on one pillow and the Washington Fair Deal planners on the other must have the respective ghosts of Boss Tweed and Morris Hillquit turning madly in their graves. Certainly the dethroning of the boss and the demolition of the big city machines has been for decades a primary aim of liberal politics. To the liberal, Tammany and its like were the symbol—and often the actuality—of everything reactionary, the chief road-block in the path of reform. "Throw the rascals out" was the rallying cry of virtuous and indignant progressives.

Yet after almost two decades of New Deal and Fair Deal, the bosses and the machines are still very much there. Moreover, on virtually every issue of public policy—labor law, housing, welfare economics, civil rights—they have been liberalism's powerful allies, and it is quite possible that without them neither Roosevelt nor Truman would have got anywhere—not even to the White House. In election after election, the machines have proved themselves the most dependable mainstay of the Democratic coalition; and no one doubts that they are anywhere but in the center of Mr. Truman's astute calculations for his own and the Fair Deal's future.

In the struggle to strengthen and expand the liberal program that will mark the years ahead, are the machines only fair-weather friends, or is this likely to be a permanent alliance, based not merely on vote-getting considerations, but perhaps on some measure of mutuality of interest and shared conviction? And if the latter is the case, what happens to the liberal's ancient pledge to throw the rascals out, and to his perennial yearning for a machineless third party?

For a good seventy or eighty years, the old-line machine undoubtedly earned its place as the whipping boy of liberals and reformers. It subverted local democracy by making corruption the norm. It fragmentized and deflected the political energies of ambitious young men which might otherwise have flowed naturally into channels of social reform, for while the machine was plebeian by birth, it seldom looked kindly at any reckless disturbance of the *status quo*. Whatever progressive tendencies were developing in the two-party structure found their limits quickly defined by the machine professionals who were in the business of politics.

Yet even in its most unsavory days, for millions of immigrants the city machines tempered the rigors of Americanization with a genial benevolence, pioneering in a form of primitive hand-to-mouth social welfare long before more disinterested agencies entered the field. Indeed, it often seemed that the machine was an informal means of providing ethnic representation in government. Moreover, in the crowded, polyglot slums of our dozen largest cities, the machine boss has always been, by the nature of things, an enemy of racial and religious discrimination.

Today, in many ways, the traditional city machine has lost its grip; its older methods are no longer so effective; new forces oppose it in the community. Labor unions and citizens' groups have shown that they can, if pressed, develop political machines of their own. Yet despite harassment on all sides, the machine still retains a large measure of strength and the local bosses remain the kingmakers. To maintain its preeminence, however, the machine has had to change, to adopt new methods and support new programs to an extent undreamed of by political thinkers a generation ago. The most visible—and important—alteration in the machine is its new liberalism. In the past, the bosses were normally oblivious to any issue more remote than the bridge over the Watackamuck Creek or the new streetcar franchise; their local patriotism was most aptly expressed by one Brooklyn politician: "The Democrats run the city, the Republicans run the state—and who gives a damn who's President?"

Thirty or forty years ago, the machines did not have to bother about issues—liberal or otherwise. Their strength was located in organization, not ideology—in the control of a disciplined block of voters in every precinct, not in allegiance to any kind of program. The machine retained its following by a judicious distribution of jobs and favors. The ward boss was a one-man employment and social service agency. He controlled hundreds—or thousands—of jobs in both city offices and private concerns. He provided legal advice, adjusted complaints with city bureaus, loaned rent money, called off the policeman who was harassing a push-cart peddler. Every legal infringement—from truancy to second-story jobs—might be adjusted if the boss was favorably disposed. "Murder, rape, and robbery with a gun I never touch," Peter McGuinness told the *New Yorker*'s Richard H. Rovere. "But something like housebreaking—what the hell, the first couple times don't prove there's anything wrong with a boy." A diligent ward boss was always available to his flock, on winter evenings at the clubhouse, or, when the weather was good, at a popular street corner. In season and out, he ardently wooed the voters, never failing to put in an appearance at funerals, weddings, Bar Mitzvahs. The voters repaid this attentiveness by backing the organization ticket.

While much of the machine's strength depended on this intimate relation between boss and voter, other methods, somewhat less benign, were also employed. They included the stuffing of ballot boxes, filling out ballots of loyal voters who had—in past decades—gone to a premature death, and defacing opposition ballots. In a close contest there was always a block of voters who could be bought. Indeed, some citizens were loath to vote, under any circumstances, without remuneration. "If I don't get a dollar, I'll vote my principles"—as Frank R. Kent summarized the attitude years ago.

In this atmosphere of genial corruption, the machines prospered. While the pickings were slim on the precinct level, a Tammany district leader like George Washington Plunkitt could make a million dollars, and Richard Croker, head of the Hall, amassed several millions before he retired. "I work for my pocket all the time," Croker told Lincoln Steffens. Yet a certain morality tempered this preoccupation; for, as Plunkitt pointed out, "There's all the difference in the world between honest graft and dishonest graft." Dishonest graft, which was officially reproached, involved police bribes, blackmail, and outright theft. Honest graft, of which Plunkitt boasted, usually meant capitalizing on inside tips—buying up all the land where a new park was to be established, to name only one example. This, Plunkitt declared, was business. "I seen my opportunities and I took 'em. . . . Ain't it perfectly honest to charge a good price and make a profit on my investment and foresight?"

The bosses, big and little, not only accumulated wealth but acquired great power as well. They controlled mayors and governors, and often personally owned one or two senators and several representatives. They cowed businessmen, created fear if not adulation in the press. Not infrequently they controlled the opposition party as well as their own. The bosses, in short, completely dominated their communities—Murphy in New York, Hague in Jersey City, Cox in Cincinnati, Pendergast in Kansas City, Crump in Memphis.

TWENTY-SEVEN years ago, in *The Great Game of Politics,* Frank Kent wrote: ". . . who has more influence in New York than Charles F. Murphy, the boss of Tammany Hall? J. Pierpont Morgan? William Randolph Hearst? Governor Alfred E. Smith? William H. Anderson?"

Today Kent could certainly not say the same about the present leader of the Hall, Carmine G. DeSapio. Similarly, throughout the country, in the last dozen years, most of the old bosses have either been retired from the anxieties of public life or have had their claws filed down to fingernail length. In Jersey City, Frank Hague has been ousted by a former lieutenant, John Kenny, who is now solidly in control but is hardly the dictator Hague was. In Kansas City, after the jailing of Tom Pendergast, no new boss assumed undisputed mastery of the machine. Boston, though still fond of the demagogy of James Curley, has not had a boss or even a machine worthy of the name since city elections became non-partisan. Even in Memphis, Ed Crump, the last of the old bosses, can no longer regard his power as unassailable. Of the younger men, only Chicago's Jack Arvey has been able to maintain power comparable to the old-timers'—and then only because he has revised his political handbook to bring it smartly up to date.

The eclipse of the bosses has been reflected in the shadow that has fallen over the old-line machines. They no longer monopolize the business of winning elections. Both the AFL and CIO have built local machines that often rival the "organization" in effectiveness. In some communities even so refined a bunch as the Americans for Democratic Action can throw its weight around vigorously enough to be noticed. In New York, during the last dozen years, both Democrats and Republicans have been dependent on the endorsement of the splinter parties—

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American Labor or Liberal—to win close contests. (In deference to the current line of the Communist party—to which it is firmly hooked—the American Labor party plays a lone hand these days, but the Democrats still find themselves disconcertingly dependent on the Liberal party. They can win a city election with the Liberals in opposition, but not a state election.)

The machines not only face strong competition from the "amateurs," but the ties of sentiment that bind the voters to the "organization" have atrophied in an age which sometimes considers ideas to be more important than affections. The ward boss is no longer a revered figure in his community. Today half his constituents might not know who he is.

There are a number of other reasons, some already mentioned, for this crisis of the machine. For one thing, the growing sophistication of the voters in matters civic has had its effect: a district leader would be swept from office were he to make as candid a defense of "honest graft" as did Plunkitt. A gradual strengthening of the merit system has reduced the number of jobs available to the machines, although city civil service can still manage to find merit where political expediency suggests; new methods of fiscal control and accounting, centralized purchasing, and other innovations of "scientific" city management have also inhibited—but hardly ended—old-fashioned raids on the treasury. The rise of the welfare state has tended to make the boss's philanthropy superfluous. In time of depression the federal government provides relief jobs—and it is not necessary to have political connections to get one. Home relief is the function of the city's Department of Welfare, not of Tammany Hall. For services which government does not provide, one can more readily turn to private welfare agencies than was the case forty years ago. Moreover, trade unions in the larger cities provide health services, pension programs, and a whole range of welfare benefits unimaginable in the simpler days of Croker and Murphy.

Only in the poorest parts of a city do the machines maintain their old strength to the full. The colorful Peter McGuinness, who died in 1948, ran a district operation in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn that barely changed in thirty years. As leader of the Greenpoint People's Regular Democratic Organization, he was the voice, conscience, and undisputed master of his district. Vito Marcantonio, who is a relatively young man, is also one of the few old-fashioned local bosses left in New York. He has an elaborate organization, and he ministers to the needs of his impoverished flock—mostly newly arrived Puerto Ricans, Negroes, and Italians—with a diligence that is in no way lessened by his chores in defense of the Communist party line. Marcantonio keeps a lawyer on his payroll, employs a secretary for each language group in his district. His influence is so pervasive that many constituents believe the only way to get on relief is to see "Marc."

The continual influx of Puerto Rican immigrants bolsters Marcantonio's position. Other machines have seen their influence diminish since the end of large-scale immigration. For the millions of new arrivals had always provided the bosses with a huge reservoir of new supporters to be succored and cajoled. Today the reservoir is empty.

FORTY or fifty years ago, the grossest pandering to national or racial loyalties was often enough to put the ticket over. The slate had to be "balanced" with representatives of each group—the Irish taking precedence because of their earlier initiation into politics—but beyond that, and beyond passing mention of the crimes of the British in Ireland and the Hapsburgs in Bohemia, little in the way of platform planks was required. On the other hand, an election might be lost if a rumor gained credence that a candidate was sailing under false religious colors. In 1923, when Jack Arvey first ran for office in Chicago's predominantly Jewish 24th Ward, his detractors spread the word that he was not Jewish. To counteract this canard, his mother was produced at a public meeting.

"Is Jack Jewish?" she was loudly asked. And she replied, in Yiddish: "What else?" Arvey was elected.

There are, of course, still places like Massachusetts where an unknown candidate can win because his is the only Irish name running for a particular office, but in general the exploitation of racial and religious sentiment has become less blatant. The same ethnic groups still carry weight in city politics, but the considerations they demand from the bosses have changed from the personal to the political, from the rhetorical to the legislative. In the past five years the demands have been for state and federal FEPC laws, liberalization of DP legislation, anti-poll tax and anti-lynching laws in the South. Negro agitation for these last measures has vastly increased in recent years, and Jewish lobbying for a friendly policy towards Israel has been an important political factor since 1946. Sometimes, of course, the religious groups differ hotly over an issue—most strenuously, for example, over the Catholic demand for a measure of federal aid to parochial schools. Only in such a case do the machines encounter difficulty in energetically demanding everything that everybody who can vote wants.

The change in the relation between the ethnic blocs and the machines derives in great part from what is nothing less than an invisible revolution in American politics: the heightened "issue consciousness" of a large part of the electorate, perhaps most startlingly demonstrated in Truman's election to the presidency in 1948. In 1923, it was possible to agree with Frank Kent that the voter had little to choose from between the Democratic and Republican platforms; that platforms, in general, were humbug and that the choice in practical politics was largely between honest and dishonest men. The Roosevelt era altered this, for the New Deal platform affected every area of American life. The combination of fireside chats with the more tangible tokens of WPA money, farm subsidies, mortgage insurance, and the whole bundle of federal benefits made political notions a highly practical reality to millions of citizens. Issues became as meaningful as personalities; the promises of politicians began to count and be counted.

THESE developments—the growth in political interest, the emergence of the welfare state, the decline in immigration—have lessened the hold of the machine on American city electorates. But while the machines' influence has waned, they are still the major political forces in most urban communities. Being realistic to the core, the machines quite characteristically faced up to the new facts of American political life. Over the past two decades the machines emerged as votaries of progressive legislation. "If you can't lick 'em, join 'em."

So it is that the machines have become, year by year, as uninhibited in support of the Fair Deal, as tireless in their assaults on privilege, as bold in their designs for federal intervention in the economy, as the most militant brain-trusters in Washington. The result is that the Democratic platform of 1948 was as liberal a document as the general political atmosphere of the country would allow. Today a conservative Democratic candidate—in sharp contrast to ten years ago—is an anachronism, except in the South.

The extent to which the machines have "got religion" is most vividly seen in Chicago. Ed Kelly, the old boss and mayor, had long been a Roosevelt supporter, but he had never deviated from the accepted methods of machine politics. Jack Arvey, a Kelly lieutenant, overnight blossomed forth as a "new model" boss when he succeeded to the leadership of the party in 1946. Arvey deftly handled his public relations, creating a beguiling image of himself: the boss who was leader rather than dictator, who was as idealistic as the "do-gooders" but far more practical, who put patriotism before pocketbook rather than equating the two. The legend spread that while in the Pacific, Arvey had undergone a foxhole conversion to an unabashed and selfless liberalism.

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Arvey's actions actually gave substance to the legend. He apparently persuaded the aging Kelly to step down as mayor: the people wanted a change. In casting about for a successor, Arvey avoided organization men (there was grave doubt that he could elect one). Instead, he sounded out community leaders on whom *they* wanted, an unprecedented tactic for a boss to take. The choice became Martin Kennelly, a business man and a Democrat who had always fought the machine. Arvey elected Kennelly; he also elected a city council that was as agreeable to the dictates of the machine as in the past.

Kennelly, in turn, gave Chicago an honest administration; he made many independent appointments in the higher echelons, but he was also quite willing to place loyal Democrats in lesser jobs. The machine was satisfied; civic probity was assured; and the reformers, on the whole, were content. Ironically, Kennelly's major deficiency has been his timidity in handling racial incidents—an area in which old Boss Kelly was particularly strong.

Having given Chicago his own reform administration, Arvey lifted to the political heights two liberal stalwarts renowned for their independence. He obtained the Democratic nominations for Adlai Stevenson for governor and Paul Douglas for senator, and saw them sweep the state. Reversing the usual procedure, they pulled President Truman through to a slim victory in Illinois. Arvey had his assumptions confirmed: an uncompromising liberalism and able independent candidates for top offices—"perfuming the ticket," it used to be called—were good politics.

THE Chicago pattern has been substantially repeated in every Northern city which has a Democratic machine. For more than a decade, Tammany Hall opposed Roosevelt and the New Deal. A maverick Republican, Fiorello LaGuardia, basked in the reflected glory of the New Deal's achievements—and thereby gained considerable political benefit. Today the picture has entirely changed. Until recently, William O'Dwyer, a long-time Roosevelt follower, dominated the Hall; and the Democratic organizations in the other four boroughs doted on Truman's program. The bulk of the AFL and CIO unions, as well as a great many professional liberals who have always looked askance at Tammany, supported the city administration rather than the reformers. All this did not remove the atmosphere of discreet corruption which surrounded the O'Dwyer regime, but it buttressed it with a strength which Tammany itself never possessed. "It was difficult to muckrake O'Dwyer because fundamentally he was running a labor government," the editor of a New York liberal publication recently remarked. It is a fact of which a minority of the New York labor movement, led by David Dubinsky and organized in the Liberal party, was sadly aware after its unsuccessful attempts to oust O'Dwyer in the 1949 mayoralty election.

In New York, as in Chicago, the liberalism of the city machine insures decent statewide candidates and some good choices for Congressional representatives, however unchanged the character of city councilmen and state legislators remains. In other cities the machines do not always get behind good candidates, but they never desert the liberal banner. Sometimes this makes for incongruous alliances. In Kansas City, the late Charles Binaggio achieved considerable success in capturing sections of the local Democratic party; his political interest solely involved protection for the gambling rackets, but his political accent was impeccably Fair Deal. In Boston, James Curley has, both in prison and out, always remained close to the head of the Roosevelt and Truman processions.

ALONG with the new liberalism of the old-line machines has come the creation of revitalized Democratic machines in those communities where no effective party organization previously existed. Labor and liberal groups have usually moved in, won control of the skeleton organizations, and rebuilt them from the precinct level up. Philadelphia has recently seen this type of Democratic renascence. For decades, the Democratic party apparatus was effectively controlled by the Republicans. In the past three years, Richardson Dillworth and a group of ADA members have taken over the party and gone on to dislodge the Republicans from a number of city offices.

A similar development has occurred in the Democratic party in Michigan. In 1948, the United Automobile Workers encountered virtually no resistance as it moved into the Detroit party. It captured what was the shell of an organization and built it into a machine. Some months later, after careful preparations, it was able to win over a majority of delegates to the state convention. Today the Michigan Democratic party is a labor party in all but name.

The same is true in Minnesota, where, during the long years of Farmer-Labor government in the 20's and 30's, the Democratic party was little more than a paper organization. A decade ago the Farmer-Laborites lost control of the state to the Republicans. Subsequently, the Democrats and Farmer-Laborites fused. The left wing, which was in liaison with the Communists, was completely routed by Hubert Humphrey in 1948. Today the liberals own the Democratic machine. An analogous situation exists in the Wisconsin Democratic party, in which a number of ex-Socialists have attained positions of power. In Oregon, too, the liberal militants, led by ex-Socialist Monroe Sweetland, have won title to a machineless Democratic party. All these developments have strong backing from William Boyle, an old Pendergast hand from Kansas City who now heads the Democratic National Committee. A courageous man, Boyle is even trying to build a Democratic machine in the state of Maine.

THE changes that have overtaken the machine have in turn had a significant impact on American liberal politics. That impact can be simply phrased: for the foreseeable future, the Democratic party will probably remain the main vehicle for liberal advance—and the new streamlined Democratic urban machines will be there to keep the party in power.

During most of the Roosevelt era, the machines had not yet undergone a whole-souled conversion to New Deal politics, nor had the labor groups won an independent base within the state or city organizations. Roosevelt alone held the party together and forced the professional politicians to acquiesce in his program. In those circumstances, it was possible to speculate that Roosevelt's departure would have a disruptive effect on the party, that the city machines would revert to their traditional conservatism, the Southerners would relapse into their normal torpor, and the New Dealers and their labor allies would be cast off. With that prospect in view, liberals reasonably theorized about the need for a third party to continue the New Deal tradition.

But events have taken a different course. President Truman has manifested a boldness in his political programs almost equal to Roosevelt's, however inferior his political effectiveness. Labor's huge investment in the Democratic party and its alliances with the machines have paid off handsomely. The result is that the Democratic party in the North has gained a new cohesion, with every element united in support of the Truman program. Under the circumstances, a new liberal party would seem to be as unnecessary as it is impractical. The Southern Democrats, of course, still hobble Truman's program in Congress—but the problem of creating a liberal party in the South would remain whether or not a third party ever came into existence.

Although labor and liberal groups are firmly committed to the Democratic party (except in a few communities where maverick Republicans can be endorsed), they remain coy about avowing that commitment. Both the CIO's Political Action Committee and the AFL's Labor's League for Political Education stoutly affirm their independence of both parties; and at the last national convention of the Americans for

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Democratic Action, reference to cooperation with the Fair Deal was stricken from the political resolution.

Why this reticence? For one thing, many liberals are sentimental mugwumps at heart; they make a fetish of independence because that somehow connotes moral superiority in politics. Some of the liberals and laborites, too, are ex-Socialists and they cannot bring themselves to make the final psychological commitment to one of the two "capitalist" parties.

More significant than this nostalgic yearning for independence is a desire to maintain bargaining power. Though the liberals and the bosses agree on program, they don't always agree on candidates. The bosses are often eager to nominate machine hacks who have immaculate voting records but rarely provide inspiring leadership. The liberals want better choices. They cherish their independence, however nominal, so that they can trade their support for acceptable candidates.

This, indeed, is the tactic employed by the Liberal party in New York, which instead of endorsing approved Democrats, nominates them on its own ticket. It is a useful tactic, since the 400,000 votes which the Liberal party commands will assure the bona fide liberalism of the top Democratic nominees in any state campaign. On the other hand, a policy of organizational aloofness from the Democratic party means leaving the old-line machines masters of the party apparatus. It is a policy of surrender.

The alternatives, however, are not between submergence of identity within the Democratic party and a free-wheeling independence outside. It is possible for ADA, PAC, and LLPE to work as caucuses within the party and to retain considerable bargaining power. For if they do not win their demands, they can withhold their money and their ward heelers. That is always the tactic of a faction within a party—and it can be effective if the faction is strong. Moreover, ultimately the hold of the old machines can be weakened.

The prospect of completely eradicating machine influences is remote, however. For the machines are tenacious opponents. They are protected by elaborate organization, an intricate web of patronage, and often by the technicalities of the primary election law. Moreover, they are infinitely adaptable, having already given way on all ideological points.

Any single machine might be broken, but many of its parts would re-form about the new group. Indeed, it is almost impossible to defeat the old machine unless you win over part of it. Yet such contests are worth the effort, for in the reshuffling of forces, a more enlightened leadership might emerge in the local party.

On any realistic assessment, the best that can be anticipated is a continual tug of war between the new liberalizing elements and the machine politicians. In the prevailing balance of power, the prospects for local "clean government" are none too promising, for the liberalism of the bosses in national affairs buttresses their position on the local scene. Moreover, the slogan of "clean government" is—except in the face of flagrant thievery—not a very exciting one. The average man is content if the rules of equity are not too brazenly flouted, and if everyone gets "his."

We will probably always be plagued by a measure of old-fashioned machine politics. Even if a successful third party should ever emerge—an unlikely development, given the structure of American politics—it would unquestionably be infiltrated by the followers of the old city machines. They would not own the new party outright, but they would be too ubiquitous not to share control. For the machine men are the full-time politicians; they often have no other occupation; they are the true professionals, agreeable to any ideological coloration, concerned only with power and the perquisites of power that politics brings. That their coloration at present is Fair Deal may be taken as a tribute to the strength of social democracy in America. For these are the boys who only play to win.

THE LESSONS OF THE PEEKSKILL RIOTS

What Happened and Why

JAMES RORTY AND WINIFRED RAUSHENBUSH

IN AUGUST, a year ago, the papers headlined a story that tightened the nerves of Jewish readers from coast to coast. And not only Jews were so affected —decent men and women of all faiths and races read the story with shock and apprehension.

What had happened, apparently, was that the pattern of hatred and rioting that had preceded Hitler's capture of power in Germany had been repeated for the first time on American soil—and not in the deep South, but in Peekskill, on the outskirts of the New York metropolitan area.

A protest parade of veterans had prevented a scheduled outdoor concert by Paul Robeson, the Negro singer, which was to have been held under the auspices of the Civil Rights Congress. Members of the hostile crowds that lined the roads had hurled hate-filled insults at Jews and Negroes, and finally had physically attacked those who had come to attend the concert. In the course of the riot, automobiles were stoned and overturned; some of the concert-goers were injured; a fiery cross was burned on a nearby hillside. In the darkness and confusion of the fighting an anti-Robeson demonstrator, a veteran, was stabbed.

The riots in the small New York city of Peekskill, a little more than a year ago, aroused deep public concern. Did they represent a recrudescence of the anti-minority hostility that enabled the Ku Klux Klan to write some of the more shameful pages in American history? Did they portend a fascist danger, with all its racist menace, in our country? It was to find out what the Peekskill events really signified that James Rorty and Winifred Raushenbush undertook to write this article. Mr. Rorty is the author of many books on radio, advertising, food supply, and other matters, and has written widely on civil rights and other social problems in Commentary and other magazines. Winifred Raushenbush, his wife, has specialized in the problems of American immigrant and minority groups; she was a member of the staff of the commission that investigated the Chicago race riots after the First World War, and is the author of the American Civil Liberties Union pamphlet "How to Prevent a Race Riot in Your Home Town." Space will be provided in future issues of Commentary for further discussion, from points of view different from those of the writers, of the Peekskill affair, and of how best to deal with or forestall similar community situations.

A week later, the headlines were even bigger and more frightening.

Robeson had returned to Peekskill, and had given a concert on an abandoned golf course; 15,000 people, most of whom had come from New York in automobiles and buses, attended. The audience was protected by 2,500 of Robeson's own guards as well as by a heavy mobilization of police. No violence had occurred during the concert. But, afterward, the cars and buses of the returning concert-goers had been stoned by hundreds of men, women, and teen-agers, many of whom had shouted anti-Semitic and anti-Negro expletives. More than a hundred and fifty persons were injured. The police, it was charged, had not only failed to stop this violence but had passively permitted it and had even fraternized with the rioters, one of whom was the son of Peekskill's police chief.

This time, surely, there could be no doubt. It had happened here. The ugly drama that had had its première in Germany in the early 30's had been re-enacted in America with a similar cast, to which had been added the unfortunate Negroes.

Peekskill was denounced from coast to coast and in the capitals of Europe, Asia, and South America as reactionary and fascist-minded, a delinquent among American cities. A street banner reading "Wake Up America —Peekskill Did," displayed in Peekskill before the second riot, was cited as evidence that Peekskill was ready to see itself as the nucleus of an anti-Semitic, anti-Negro, fascist movement. Four months after the event, a scathing indictment of the Peekskill community appeared in the form of a report en-

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titled "Violence in Peekskill," published by the American Civil Liberties Union. Five other organizations signed the foreword to this report, asserting that "we believe it to be a fair representation of documented fact." (However, three organizations—the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and the National Urban League—declined to associate themselves with the report.)

The writers were asked to undertake an examination of the riots. The analysis here presented rests on a scrutiny of available published material, and on interviews with many of the people directly or indirectly involved, including police and other officials, leading citizens of the area, the local press and radio, real estate men, veterans, natives of Cortlandt, Verplanck, and Croton, summer residents, year-round Jewish and Negro residents.

Riots are notoriously difficult to report, with respect both to what happened and, especially, why it happened. Nothing short of an extended and heavily financed study by competent social scientists would be sufficient to establish the full, uncolored facts of the Peekskill riots and to place these facts in proper perspective. Obviously the writers are not in a position to render any such definitive appraisal. However, the attrition of time and the investigations of various public and private bodies have served in some degree to winnow fact from legend.

II

For three hundred years, Peekskill, the trading center of a lovely eastern New York State countryside, drowsed along without much public notice. Although it is situated now near the northern rim of the great New York metropolitan area, its basic economic character has not changed. A century or two ago the farmers and their wives bustled into town in high-wheeled buggies from Cold Spring, Mahopac, Carmel, and Croton, while today they and the summer residents arrive in cars. But Peekskill remains the trading and shopping center of an essentially rural area. Most of its citizens tend to be suspicious of anyone who deviates noticeably from the public norm, and they place a high value on conventional comportment in public places.

The essentially rural character of the Peekskill area is not likely to last much longer, however, for Peekskill is only forty miles from Times Square. It already has about 600 people who commute to New York and there are some 50,000 summer residents from New York City. A year ago, when the riots occurred, Peekskill was in a stage of transition and stress, still striving to adjust itself to the heavy influx of New Yorkers who come to pass the summer in its environs.

The city of Peekskill itself—it was a village up to ten years ago—is bounded by the Hudson River on the west, and on its other three sides by the little town of Cortlandt, which places it in an unnatural kind of economic and political strait jacket. If, to replace the present crazy-quilt of little rural townships, a considerable section of the Peekskill area were to be merged into one municipality, a much sounder development of the area might be possible. Such a municipality, for example, could conserve some of the abundant lake frontage of the area, now bought up almost entirely by summer residents, for the permanent use of the native population. In any case, at the present rate it seems likely that a few decades from now the little towns of the Peekskill area will have been swallowed up into New York City's Westchester County bedroom belt, one of the world's most moneyed and best-groomed suburbs.

Although there had always been a few Catholics and Jews in the Peekskill trading area, the population as a whole was Protestant up to a century ago, when Irish Catholics settled in Verplanck's Point, a sunny stretch of land extending into the Hudson River just south of Peekskill. Until a patient and forceful priest civilized them, so the Irish say, every other building in Verplanck was a saloon, and goats and chickens roamed the streets. Even the Italian Catholics who settled there later spoke, it is alleged, with a broad Irish brogue.

The first Catholic church in the Peekskill area was built in Verplanck in 1843. Early in the 1860's the Catholics of Peekskill decided to build a church too. There was strong opposition to this. The stones that were laid in the daytime were torn down at night. At this point, the Verplanck Catholics moved in with all-night guards, and the church went up. The Ku Klux Klan continued this tradition of anti-Catholicism in the rural counties of the Hudson Valley, and the apex of the Klan activity was reached between 1924 and

1928, when the minister of one of Peekskill's leading Protestant churches was a Klansman and many fiery crosses were burned. Al Smith's campaign aroused the anti-Catholics of the area to a fever pitch. In 1928, the Klan in a moment of sheer insanity decided to burn a cross in St. Mary's cemetery in Verplanck, which was still almost 100 per cent Irish and Catholic. That evening, the Verplanckers turned out their lights early by way of encouraging the Klansmen. Then they fell on the Klansmen and pummeled them out of town, injuring slightly one man, the Klan leader.

Recalling this twenty-year-old brawl, some younger veterans sloganeered during the first anti-Robeson demonstration about "cleaning out the Commies the way we cleaned out the Klan." No more unfortunate precedent could have been invoked. In the first place, the Verplanck Catholics had had the sense to let the Klan take the onus of lawless invasion and attack. In the second place, fighting the Klan and fighting Communism are two quite different propositions, the latter being much the more complex and difficult. Instead of "cleaning out the Commies," all that the veterans succeeded in doing was to furnish the Communists here and abroad with a first-class propagandistic springboard.

Since 1936 the Klan has not been heard of at all in the Peekskill area. The "16-foot-high Klan crosses," as an American Labor party handbill described them, that were burned on the night of the first riot, proved to be one small cross burned, not by the Klan, but as a prank by some teen-age boys. Today the Catholics constitute about one-third of the people of the city of Peekskill itself and are equally numerous in some of the surrounding towns. They are well regarded and the Catholic priests of the area are among its leading citizens. Actually, it took the Catholics almost a century to be accepted in this rural Protestant American community. This lag, and the long friction, had nothing to do with fascism, pre-fascism, or any such modern sophisticated ideologies. Rather, it was the ancient and familiar xenophobia—especially toward those of a different religion—of rural communities all over the world.

Whereas the Catholics had filtered into the area gradually for over a century, most of the Jews arrived quite suddenly, and in what appeared to the natives to be overwhelming numbers, in the brief span of thirty years. Peekskill had had a small Jewish population for many decades. But it was not prepared for the Jewish summer migrations which began shortly after World War I and which, during the summer of 1949, attracted some 30,000 Jews to the Peekskill area. Since the city of Peekskill itself has only 18,000 inhabitants, so many strangers could not fail to be upsetting.

For a variety of reasons, however, there was much less resistance to the Jews than there had been to the Catholics. During the last twenty years there has been no noteworthy anti-Jewish incident in the city of Peekskill itself and only one minor incident in the surrounding area. Reports by some journalists of anti-Semitic violence prior to the riots are said by Peekskill Jews to have been pure invention.

This is not to say that there has been no friction between the newcomers and old residents. The friction arose, in part, from the city manners and informality of dress of some of the summer residents, in part from the fact that Jewish Communists were known to be at some of the predominantly Jewish summer colonies of the area. In addition, there was certainly some downright racial and religious prejudice of the kind that can be found in almost every small town in America. There was also resentment against Jews in rural townships outside the city of Peekskill, where the natives feared that they themselves might become a minority. In Shrub Oak, for instance, one-third of the year-round population is now Protestant, one-third Catholic, and one-third Jewish. School board elections in Shrub Oak and other towns reflect a continuous struggle for power among Catholics, Jews, and Protestants. The fact that most of the Jews in the area do not vote and do not run for public office somewhat dulls the conflict.

The history of Peekskill is probably not very different from that of other Hudson Valley towns with recent and heavy Jewish summer-resident populations. It is not a history of brotherly love and mutual understanding. It is also *not* a history of violence or of festering anti-Semitism.

Just as deficiency diseases are caused initially by what people do not eat, so racial and religious prejudices thrive largely because of

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what communities do not do. If they had been used in time, the available resources of mutual respect and confidence among Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish groups in the Peekskill area were quite enough to have prevented the riots—or at least to have aborted their racist aspects. Because they were not used, the latent virus of anti-Semitism flared during the crisis—briefly but so violently that many Jews were convinced that they were witnessing an actual pogrom.

It wasn't, as later events proved. The active infection chiefly responsible for the breakdown of the Peekskill community was neither anti-Semitism nor fascism, native or imported. It was the Communist virus—and the resulting vigilante fever.

What does make the Peekskill area different from most similar sections of the United States is the presence of Communists in large numbers. The Communists make up only a small percentage of the Jewish summer population. But their numbers are not insignificant, and they have managed in their usual disciplined and vociferous way to make their presence keenly felt. "We have had Communists on our doorsteps for thirty years," is the way the natives put it. The three main Communist concentrations are Camp Beacon on the north, around the town of Mohegan to the east, and around Croton on the south. Camp Beacon is known to the area as the scene of important party conferences, and accommodates 1,400 persons.

For the residents of Peekskill and its surrounding towns, the Communists were an especially alien group. The area is traditionally Republican. In the city of Peekskill itself, with its 18,000 inhabitants, there are believed to be only two or three Communists, while the American Labor party vote has almost never totaled over a hundred. There was no open conflict between the natives and the Communist summer residents prior to the first Robeson concert in 1946. It was Robeson's series of three concerts that provided a focus for the suspicion, dislike, and uneasiness of the native population.

III

Not all Americans who have at some time heard Paul Robeson sing are aware that during the war he entered a new phase of his career. Having been a successful football star, lawyer, actor, concert singer, movie actor, and radio performer, he decided in 1946 to dedicate his life to leading "his people" along the path marked out by the Communist party line.

As the residents of the Peekskill area saw it, the three Robeson concerts held there in 1946, 1947, 1948 could no more be considered mere musical events than a Communist rally in Madison Square Garden. They were primarily fund-raising affairs and Communist demonstrations. (Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt in one of her columns vigorously objected to Robeson's utilization of his concerts for political purposes.) Each year Robeson's supporters in the area were forced to look for a new location. In 1949, Robeson's sponsors, the Civil Rights Congress, had to hire a field in Cortlandt, neighboring on Peekskill. When local citizens explained to the owners that the Civil Rights Congress was on the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations, they tried vainly to break their contract.

Every year that Robeson appeared, there were protest letters to the Peekskill *Evening Star*. In 1947, the Peekskill post of the American Legion asked citizens to "refrain from attending." As a counter to this request, an advertisement in the *Evening Star*, with twenty-eight signatures, including that of Albert E. Kahn, noted Croton Communist sympathizer, welcomed Robeson to Peekskill.

As a top-flight Communist spokesman, Robeson is quite open about his loyalty to the Soviet Union. During the summer of 1949, he was quoted widely in the American press as asserting that he would not fight for this country against Russia. "I love this Soviet people," said Robeson, "more than any other nation . . . it [is] unthinkable that the Negro people of America or elsewhere in the world could be drawn into war with the Soviet Union." Robeson's speeches were featured in the Peekskill *Evening Star*, which also headlined, as did the metropolitan press, such events as the Communist mass picketing of Judge Medina's court and the Mindszenty trial in Hungary.

All this served to heighten local anti-Communist feeling, so that when it was suddenly announced, only ten days before the event, that Robeson was to hold another "concert" in the area, there was an immediate buzz of protest.

Two local veterans were chiefly responsible for the idea of confronting Robeson's fourth propaganda meeting with a counter-demonstration. They were Herman Schwiter, who lives in the town of Cortlandt, within a mile or two of the scene of the two riots, and Vincent Boyle, a member of one of Verplanck's oldest Irish-Catholic families and commander of the William J. Boyle post of the American Legion (named after his brother, killed in World War II). Neither veteran resembles the "mobster," "fascist," and anti-Semitic caricatures who glare and froth in the pages of the *Daily Worker*.

Schwiter is a tall, gaunt ex-sailor in his fifties who served in the navy in both world wars. In World War I he was blown out of a mine-sweeper; in World War II, out of a submarine chaser. He is a native-born American of German descent, a Catholic, married to a Protestant. When he heard that Robeson had scheduled a fourth propaganda concert, Schwiter telephoned his friends: "If it's all right for the Commies to picket Medina's court and call him a rat, why isn't it all right for us to picket Robeson's phony concert?"

Boyle is now twenty-four. He is a pint-sized ex-gob, perhaps a little less cocky today than he was a year ago when fate caught him up in a moment of history he is still trying to understand. Of more than average intelligence, Boyle got some useful training in the navy and supplemented it by a year of study under the GI Bill of Rights. He has a good job as an electrician and was recently married. Earnest to the point of naivety, Boyle has neither the glibness nor the deviousness of the typical small-town politician, nor is there any evidence of anti-Semitism in his past record or his present attitudes. His brother was in the air force and was killed while flying the Hump. His father died when he heard the news. Both are buried in the Catholic cemetery just across the highway from Lakeland Acres where the first Robeson meeting was to be held.

It was Boyle who wrote the letter to the Peekskill *Evening Star* that is cited in the American Civil Liberties Union's report of the riots, along with an accompanying editorial, as constituting "a calculated act" leading to "a deliberate and premeditated invasion of Cortlandt, mainly by Peekskill men, for the purpose of committing a crime."

Boyle's letter read in part as follows:

"The present days seem to be crucial ones for the residents of this area with the present epidemic of polio. Now we are being plagued with another, namely, the appearance of Paul Robeson and his Communistic followers, due to appear here August 27th. It is an epidemic because they are coming here to induce others to join their ranks and it is unfortunate that some of the weaker minded are susceptible to their fallacious teachings unless something is done by the loyal Americans of this area.

"Quite a few years ago a similar organization, the Ku Klux Klan, appeared in Verplanck and received their just reward. Needless to say they have never returned. I am not intimating violence in this case, but I believe that we should give this matter serious consideration and strive to find a remedy that will cope with the situation the same way as Verplanck and with the same result that they will never reappear in this area.

"The irony of this meeting is that they intend to appear at Lakeland Acres Picnic Area. If you are familiar with this location you will find that it is located directly across the street from the Hillside and Assumption cemeteries. Yes, directly across the street from the resting place of those men who paid the supreme sacrifice in order to insure our democratic form of government. . . . If we tolerate organizations such as this we are apt to face a repetition of the past and in the near future. If we of this area have not forgotten the war, then let us cooperate with the American Legion and similar veteran organizations and vehemently oppose their appearance or appearances. Let us leave no doubt in their minds that they are unwelcome around here either now or in the future. . . ."

In the same issue, the leading editorial, after briefly reviewing Robeson's career, concluded:

". . . Every ticket purchased for the Peekskill concert will drop nickels and dimes into the till basket of an un-American political organization.

"If the Robeson concert this Saturday follows the pattern of its predecessors, it will consist of an unsavory mixture of song and political talk by one who has described Russia as his 'second motherland' and who has avowed 'the greatest contempt' for the democratic press.

"The time for tolerant silence that signifies

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approval is running out. Peekskill wants no rallies that support iron curtains, concentration camps, blockades, and NKVD's, no matter how masterful the decor, nor how sweet the music."

The general line of both the letter and editorial was not dissimilar to many such in the New York press at the time of the Bund rally in Madison Square Garden in 1939—which occasioned a mass picketing demonstration. Their attitude to violence was ambiguous, Boyle's letter disavowing it, but not very convincingly in view of his reference to the Verplanck precedent. (A second editorial, which appeared the day of the riot, specifically warned against violence and urged potential troublemakers to stay away.) The Peekskill community was fed up with the annual Robeson meetings, wanted to be rid of them, and was uncertain as to what to do about it. In such a situation, the question of violence is solved on the spot, according to the contingencies of events. In the case of the Bund rally in New York a decade earlier, violence was avoided by a strong police mobilization and by the grace of urban geography: Madison Square Garden had many avenues of access and exit and it was easy for the Bundists to mix with the crowd, slip in, and then slip out into the crowd again. In Peekskill, geography and human irresponsibility combined to transform a contingent situation into a tragic one.

The first Robeson riot was compounded of accidents and blunders, including a little over-smartness on the part of the veterans. Some of the veterans probably foresaw—and hoped—that the crowds attracted by their demonstration would block the roads and thereby delay or prevent the concert. This was, in fact, what occurred. But other, unforeseen, things occurred too.

The concert was scheduled for 8:15 PM. Shortly before eight o'clock Ray La Polla, news editor of the local radio station WLNA, phoned the United Press: "The roads are jammed for miles; anything can happen."

What had already happened was that an estimated 2,000 ticket holders had tried to reach the concert grounds, of whom only about 200 had succeeded—not including Robeson. According to William L. Patterson, the singer was found sitting in his car a few hundred yards from the concert grounds and was persuaded to take refuge in the home of a nearby sympathizer. By blocking the 20-foot black-top highway that provided the only means of access to the grounds by car, the parade had delayed, and in effect prevented, the concert.

It had also provided a release for the muddy brew of anti-Communism, anti-Semitism, and anti-Negroism that boiled out of the crowds, numbering an estimated 5,000, that lined the highway near the entrance to the grounds. The name-calling is said to have started with the appearance of a number of mixed black and white couples. "Kike" and "nigger-lover" were among the milder insults reported by eyewitnesses. Even the Jewish war veterans who participated in the veterans' parade were booed and insulted by anti-Semites among the bystanders (though they were also applauded by members of the crowd).

Neither the veterans as a whole nor their leaders had reckoned on the mob hysteria and hatred for which their demonstration provided a release. Many of them, in fact, were dismayed and shocked, including Vincent Boyle. After the veterans' parade ended (it was by this time too late for the concert to get organized), Boyle and his fiancée returned as spectators to the entrance of the picnic grounds in time to witness the next act of the drama.

In semi-darkness, a group of about thirty local men, including some veterans, had defied the Robeson guards stationed at the entrance and pushed down the lane toward the concert grounds. Soon they were joined by dozens and ultimately by hundreds of others, most of them bystanders who took no part in the fighting. Alarmed, Boyle ran down the lane in a vain attempt to call off this foray.

At first the violence consisted in intermittent stoning and fist-fighting. Then, as the darkness deepened, came the stabbing, by one of the Robeson ushers, of William Secor, a native of Mohegan and a veteran, though not a member of any veterans' organization.

The Westchester Grand Jury, which investigated the riots, said in its presentment: "This stabbing provided the spark which converted all of the people into an unruly crowd determined to prevent the concert from being staged."

This is putting it too mildly. All eyewitness accounts agree that after the stabbing the violence was savage and terrifying though intermittent. On the other hand it is impossible to substantiate the innumerable atrocity stories that became current after the riot. Were women stripped and beaten? Were children tossed over wire fences? The Grand Jury was probably right in concluding that these and similar stories were inventions or gross exaggerations circulated by the Communists and their sympathizers. Nevertheless, the truth was brutal enough. It was a nasty affair, as most riots are.

What about the police? Did they blunder at the first riot? In the opinion of the writers, the answer is yes, and quite needlessly. The police had plenty of warning that trouble was likely. Yet only six deputies were present during the parade and afterward. And it was not until 8:30, when the stabbing occurred, that the call for help was phoned to the State Troopers who were being held in reserve at the Putnam Barracks nearby. Because of the road block, which had developed hours before and of which the police were fully informed, there was a delay in phoning as well as a delay in the arrival of the troopers. When they finally got there, the rioting stopped almost immediately.

Yet in the face of these facts the Grand Jury presentment says: "In the light of their experience [with previous Robeson concerts in the area] the precautions taken by these police officers met with the standards of good police procedure."

It is significant, and a rather healthy sign, that most of the responsible community leaders in the Peekskill area disagree with the Grand Jury on this point. They are convinced, as are the writers, that just a few more policemen would probably have been enough to prevent the first Robeson riot. On the other hand it is impossible to give credence to the allegation of the Communists that police protection was *deliberately* withheld. There is absolutely no evidence for this accusation.

IV

Less than twenty-four hours after the first riot the Robesonites assembled 1,600 of their followers on a nearby Katonah estate and announced that they would make another attempt to hold the concert that the veterans had prevented. Four days later, on Thursday, they succeeded in renting for the concert, to be held on the following Sunday, an abandoned golf course, again on Oregon Road, only a mile away from the scene of the first conflict.

The next morning the veterans, despite the urgent entreaties of District Attorney George M. Fanelli, voted to exercise their legal right to hold another protest parade on the highway in front of the concert ground.

It was touch-and-go for a while at the veterans' meeting. The district commander of the American Legion had publicly expressed his disapproval of a second demonstration, pointing out that "it is not the duty of American Legionnaires to appoint themselves vigilantes." The national organization of the Jewish War Veterans had endorsed either "quarantining" the Robeson demonstrators, or conducting the veterans' protest parade at a safe distance. But just when these arguments seemed about to win the day somebody demanded: "Have the Robesonites been asked to call off *their* show?" They hadn't, nor is it likely that they would have acceded if they had been asked. At the next showing of hands the die was cast for another demonstration.

The veterans, in voting for another demonstration, wanted to save face. They felt that if Robeson held his second meeting unopposed, they would appear in the public eye as cowards and braggarts, intimidated by Communist threats of "getting even." But it does not seem that, as a body, they wanted or planned another riot—and another scolding by their national organizations and a large section of the national press. At one of their meetings, before it was known that Robeson was returning for a second rally, the veterans considered protesting both against the Communists and against the violence that had occurred following their first parade, but the idea was buried under the excitement generated by news of the approaching second "concert." When one veteran spoke up and said: "If they [the Communists] attack us, let's really do a job on them," speaker after speaker rose and said in effect: "If you are bringing your organization down for that purpose, please stay away."

It is also probably true, on the other hand, that there were veterans and others who, while disclaiming violent intentions, were not exactly displeased at the prospect of battling it out with the Communists.

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As for the Communist-controlled Civil Rights Congress which again sponsored Robeson, its avowed interest in the defense of free speech and assembly was, one may be sure, wholly hypocritical. Those familiar with the Communist program have long recognized that it requires the exploitation of the civil rights issue only with the objective of polarizing extremist passions and sowing the seeds of discord—the more violent the better—that will disrupt the democratic process. What the Communists wanted was another propaganda harvest which would be all the greater if a second veterans' demonstration led to another round of violence and another flare-up of racism. That the party's strategists had this in mind is clearly suggested by the bellicose tub-thumping and breast-beating of Robeson, Davis, and other Communist leaders, and by the all-out mendacity of the Communist and crypto-Communist press during the week between the riots. Both were well calculated to fan the combativeness of the veterans and their friends.

Howard Fast, for instance, after describing how twenty Robesonites held 1,000 natives at bay, commented: "The thousand New Americans for all their big talk were not very brave hand-to-hand in the dark."

What most angered the people of the Peekskill area, however, were the Communist lies about Secor.

On August 29, the *Daily Worker* reported: "Kramer [one of the Robesonites] said the man who was stabbed was knifed by mobsters. Our people came to hear a concert. It is nonsense that they carried weapons. In the dark, during the attack, I saw plenty of mobsters hit their own people with rocks and clubs. The man who was stabbed was certainly stabbed by them." On September 1, in a speech at the Golden Gate ballroom in Harlem, Howard Fast said: "I further charge they stabbed their own in a plot to accuse us of murder."

Unfortunately for this thesis, implausible on the face of it, some remarkable flashlight pictures of the melee that preceded the stabbing show a knife in the hand of a Robeson usher who was standing about fifteen feet from Howard Fast. (A Robeson usher is charged with the stabbing of Secor in one of the two indictments brought in by the Grand Jury.)

At a Harlem meeting on August 30, Robeson declared that he would sing again in Peekskill protected by 3000 of his own "security guards." "This marks the turning point!" shouted Robeson. "From now on we take the offensive." Another Communist leader, Benjamin Davis, said at the same meeting: "We warn all the flunkies of Wall Street, whether they wear white sheets or black robes like Judge Medina, that we are peace-loving people. But we are not pacifists and we are going to stand up toe to toe and slug it out."

Statements such as these were read in Peekskill, and the community's temper, already at a high pitch, mounted higher. It was evident to anyone living in the town that it would be a miracle if another Robeson meeting did not precipitate violence.

MEANWHILE, the Peekskill telephone company was forced to hire extra operators to deal with one of the most disturbing and least explained phenomena of the riots: a plague of anonymous and threatening phone calls. All of them were made from coin boxes. The calls—there were hundreds of them—started before the first riot and reached their apex during the week between the riots. Among the threatened were Chester Rick, at whose home the 1948 Robeson concert had been held, and Mrs. Mary Mobile, who criticized the American Legion post (which had protested a Robeson meeting) in a letter to the *Evening Star.* On the other side, Vincent Boyle and Leonard Rubenfeld, a Jewish war veteran and a member of District Attorney George M. Fanelli's staff, also received threatening anonymous calls. The calls seemed to be directed, in almost equal volume, against pro- and anti-Robesonites. The identities of the callers remain a mystery.

Racketeers poured into Peekskill after the first riot like dirty water from a broken drain. Among them were two frowzy professional anti-Semites who attempted to distribute their literature at the second riot but were quickly apprehended by veterans and spectators and chased out of town. There were also the flag salesmen. Practically every businessman in town felt compelled to buy an American flag—for $14.

That was Peekskill on the eve of the second Robeson "concert." Two effigies of Paul Robeson were hanged Saturday night in Peekskill and removed by the police the following morning. "We all knew what was coming," recalls a well-known businessman. "The town was like an armed camp."

ACTUALLY, neither the veterans nor the townspeople of the area were armed; nor were they prepared for the disaster into which they were sliding with a kind of hypnotized helplessness. All told, only about 2,000 veterans marched in the second parade, as compared with a hoped-for 10,000. They had less than three days in which to mobilize their forces and on the day of the parade many of the groups that had planned to participate were turned back by the state troopers to prevent jamming of the roads.

In contrast, the Communist apparatus of organization and propaganda operated with speed and efficiency, beginning the day after the first riot. Every Communist cell and every front organization in the metropolitan area and in the Hudson Valley resort area was "activized." Meeting followed meeting. Press reports told of the recruiting of Robeson's promised 3,000 guards from the "goon" squads of Communist-dominated unions, and of the chartering of buses to transport a predicted 30,000 Communists and Communist sympathizers from New York and its suburbs to the rural Armageddon where avowed totalitarians would do battle for the Bill of Rights.

On the morning of the second concert, which was scheduled for 2:30 PM, both guards and "music lovers" arrived many hours ahead of time. The guards were all present by 9 AM.

By noon, when the 2,000 paraders began to assemble, a crowd of spectators numbering eventually about 5,000 lined the highway. They saw, in the hollow below them, an assemblage of 15,000 singing, cheering Robesonites, protected by a triple cordon of 2,500 "security guards." Led by a man in the uniform of an army lieutenant, the guards were stationed shoulder to shoulder in military formation. They were armed with baseball bats, tire irons, bottles on sticks, pepper, and old-fashioned can openers.

To deal with this situation, the county and state authorities had mobilized all their available forces, including even Westchester County Parkway police who had been detached from their duties as traffic control officers. In all, the police on the scene numbered 750, in addition to the 154 Peekskill and Putnam County officers assigned to street and highway patrol duties. The state police brought a radio-equipped trailer, radio police cars, walkie-talkies, loud speakers, and a helicopter especially chartered for the occasion. From a command post on the highway, District Attorney Fanelli assumed over-all direction of the police operations.

All accounts agree that, from early morning on, the atmosphere was one of fear and tension, mounting as the day advanced. This is confirmed by the tape recording made on the scene by Francis Lough of Station WLNA, which sounds like a scene out of a war documentary. You hear the mass singing of the Robesonites and the drums and fifes of the Legion bands trying vainly to drown them out. You hear the roar of the police helicopter overhead. You hear, as the crowd heard, the mechanically amplified voice of Howard Fast cutting through this uproar to shriek at the "un-American filth parading outside."

The importance of the loudspeaker as a factor in riot situations cannot be minimized. It swept the calculated insults of Fast's demagogy into the faces of the Peekskill people outside the grounds and undoubtedly contributed to the subsequent violence of the spectators.

Again anti-Semitic and anti-Negro epithets were shouted by the crowd, but such incidents were noticeably fewer than during the first demonstration. The concert was conducted as planned, and without disorder. At its conclusion the police moved the crowds back and the automobiles of the concert-goers began coming out of the only exit from the grounds.

Then the stones began to fly. No one knows who started it. Twigs, pebbles, tomatoes, and soft drink bottles were thrown as well as stones. Once the stoning began, it spread like a chain reaction through the crowd. Before it had exhausted itself, hundreds of cars had their windows or windshield wipers broken, and three were overturned. Over 150 people were reported injured, three seriously. Cars were stoned as far south as Yonkers, twenty miles away. It was a horrifying spectacle of mob violence at its ugliest.

It has been charged, and there is some evidence, that the police, especially the West-

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chester County officers, fraternized with the rioters and condoned their violence. Unquestionably, the police were hostile to the Communists, and were further angered by the appearance on the scene of Robeson's private police in the shape of the "security guards." It should be recognized, though, that from the police point of view, the situation was next to impossible. The bulk of their forces were tied down by the imperative necessity of preventing contact, with a resulting bloody battle, between the Robeson guards and the crowds outside the grounds. And after the stoning started, the traffic had to be kept moving, else the stalled cars would have been sitting ducks for the bombardment of the stoners. It was therefore impossible either to detail enough officers to patrol the roads effectively and prevent the stoning, or to take time out to arrest any substantial number of its perpetrators.

After the stonings, many of the drivers of the chartered buses deserted and about 700 of the Robeson guards were left stranded late that night on the concert grounds. According to the police, trouble started when a departing carload of guards was stopped and one of the guards swung a baseball bat at one of the troopers. After that, all outgoing cars were searched and over two hundred baseball bats along with fifty other weapons were found and confiscated. In some cases the police used their nightsticks to smash car windows and "take a poke" at "obstreperous" guards; none of the latter was seriously injured.

The guards were, at their own request, transported under police escort from the concert grounds to the Mohegan Colony where they spent several hours. The writers interviewed the president of the Colony, who witnessed their arrival. He declares that none of them showed any signs of having been hurt, that they were marched in military formation, and that they even cleaned up the grounds before they returned to New York early the following morning.

V

THE backwash of excitement and lawlessness from the riots continued for several days. A number of attempts were made to burn the house of Stephen D. Szego, who had rented the abandoned Hollow Brook golf course to the Robesonites for their second concert. No great damage was done and the arsonists were never identified.

The Communist-Jew identification became common parlance during the period of the riots. "It was amazing after the first riot," said a liberal official, "to hear some people say that all Jews and Negroes were Communists. But by the day of the second concert, even high school and college graduates were convinced of this."

Many very nasty incidents occurred. A teen-age boy, rebuked for pawing over the newspapers in a stationery store in an effort to find a picture of himself in the crowds that lined the highway, returned at night with ten buddies, aged fourteen to sixteen, and invited the Jewish storekeeper to step outside; a citizen intervened and summoned a police officer. In another incident, as some summer residents were leaving after Labor Day, hoodlums stopped the cars, asked whether the occupants were Negroes, Jews, or Communists, and made vague threats.

A more serious unpleasantness involved a Jewish businessman, owner for thirty years of an attractive Peekskill store. After the first riot, it was rumored that this man had loaned Robeson his car, had sheltered Robeson in his home, had sold tickets for the concert, had sold food to the concertgoers. None of these charges was true. But the businessman's car was destroyed and when he left town—to take a vacation in the Adirondacks—the myth-makers decided they had been right; the fellow was a Communist and had fled Peekskill never to return. In great distress, the man's son placed an advertisement in the *Star* offering a $100 reward to anyone who would identify the slanderers of his father. Subsequently the Chamber of Commerce devoted a session to rumors, by way of stopping this kind of thing.

The Jews responded to this tidal wave of suspicion in various ways. Some summer colonies employed guards. Young people collected stones. Meetings were held in Peekskill, Putnam, and Croton. Cool heads advised doing nothing, on the theory that the excitement would blow over. Others advocated a "We're against Communists, too" policy. Some argued that a stand against Communism and for civil liberties should be taken. The national Jewish organizations were called upon for help.

Business boycotts became the weapons of contending factions in Peekskill. Anti-Communists asked local advertisers to discontinue their advertisements in the *Peekskill Shopper,* a weekly owned by a Jewish veteran, which had said editorially that freedom of speech should have been permitted at the first concert. To counter this, pro-Robesonite summer residents threatened a shoppers' boycott unless storekeepers discontinued their advertisements in the *Evening Star*.

A move to ban Howard Fast's books from the Peekskill library was prevented by an alert liberal on the library board.

But these manifestations soon subsided and it was evident that what the area wanted most after the riots was peace. When the veterans, and especially Vincent Boyle, pressed for an Americanism Day parade on October 2, the community, fed up with demonstrations, gritted its teeth and squelched the idea.

VI

RIOTS are so compounded of failure, folly, and evil that they seldom have good fruits. Their only usefulness is to illuminate what should have been done in a particular locality years or months earlier, and to throw light on what other communities can do to prevent similar disasters.

In retrospect it is, of course, easy enough to see what could have happened as against what actually happened. The "quarantine method," later successfully applied to Robeson's appearances in Chicago and Washington, D. C., might have been used in Cortlandt. According to this method, the *Evening Star* and Station WLNA would have given no publicity to this concert that was not paid for by the Robesonites. A maximum of 2,000 Communists, sympathizers, and innocent participants would have assembled in an open field after dark, with the aid of a few traffic officers, and then gone home.

If anti-Communist feeling in the area was so great that this much self-control was not possible, the anti-Communist demonstration should have been held elsewhere than at the site of the concert, preferably at a different time, and should perhaps have taken another form—a meeting in the Peekskill baseball stadium or Depew Park, for instance. And, in any case, the police should have been given to understand that it was their job to preserve order and prevent the violation of anyone's civil liberties—not to conduct a private war against Communism on their own.

Hindsight suggests a more radical solution with respect to the second riot. In the opinion of the writers, once the first riot had taken place, no further confrontation of the two aroused and hostile groups should have been permitted. Both the Robeson concert and the veterans' parade should have been canceled, either by stretching the emergency powers of county or state authorities or, if necessary, by the invocation of martial law. Abstractly, this could be interpreted as presenting the veterans with a victory. But the alternative was a new, vicious, and bloody riot that could have been prevented only by a mobilization of the National Guard. As so often happens, the real choice was between different evils rather than between good and evil. Failure to take proper action at the first riot could only be made up for by more drastic action before the second.

VII

IN ADDITION to the newspaper reports, there are now three major accounts of the riots: Howard Fast's "Eye-Witness: Peekskill," a Communist treatment; the American Civil Liberties Union pamphlet, "Violence in Peekskill," running to fifty pages and published in January 1950; and the 27-page presentment of the Grand Jury of Westchester County, issued on June 16, 1950, an official treatment. There are, in addition, televised movies taken at the second riot, sound recordings, and a great gallery of newspaper photographs. These latter materials have probably influenced the public mind more than has the printed word.

Unfortunately, none of the three major sources on the riots is entirely satisfactory.

The Communist reports of the riots are interesting only to the degree that they reveal the Communist objectives and strategems in the whole affair. They are, of course, wholly unreliable as factual sources.

"Violence in Peekskill," the report issued by the American Civil Liberties Union, is an impassioned indictment of the Peekskill community, its press, the veterans, and the police. In contrast, the Communists are flatly acquitted of any responsibility for either riot. Throughout the document, the authors

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maintain the thesis that what was involved was the right to hold "a peaceful concert." Accompanying such naivety, there is a rather cavalier, and partial, handling of facts. The Grand Jury presentment justly said: "Much of its text and some of its conclusions are so far from the truth as to be scandalous." The presentment might well have specified such an example of inaccuracy as the allegation appearing on page 41 about veterans who were observed loading rocks into their car on the morning of the second riot. Because the report dramatically gave the car license, it was possible for the Grand Jury to check this. It found that the car was owned by a Jewish war veteran, a resident of Shrub Oak, who testified that he was building a dry well and that neither he nor his car had gone near the scene of the riots.

With the possible exception of a few statements made by persons whose names are given, the writers of this article would not regard any of the allegations made in the American Civil Liberties Union report as worthy of credence without careful checking. As social science, which it perhaps does not purport to be, the report is even less satisfactory. Peekskill is an ordinary American community which has undergone rather extraordinary social strains – concerning which the authors of the American Civil Liberties Union report exhibit neither interest nor understanding. Instead, in their eagerness to expose and denounce, they represent the people of the area to be something very close to the caricature drawn of them by the Communists, who called them fascists, Nazis, storm troopers, and mobsters.

By comparison, the Grand Jury's own presentment on the riots, based on an extended inquiry during which it examined 247 witnesses, is temperate and fair in its review of the facts, intelligent and liberal in its recommendations.

After condemning unqualifiedly the "un-American, unwarranted, and lawless acts of violence" that occurred during the riots, the Grand Jury goes on to urge, among other things, that patriotic and loyal Americans avoid being drawn into Communist traps set for the purpose of inviting situations that might encourage violence; that local officers be empowered to exercise "the widest discretion in preventing the development of conditions that might result in the outbreak of violence"; that education concerning the true nature and purpose of Communism be undertaken in every community; and that legislative bodies should continue to consider appropriate laws to deal with the Communist problem.

However, the Grand Jury presentment is flawed badly by its failure—presumably on political grounds—to subject the police and other public authorities to the same rigorous criticism that it applies to the veterans and the Robesonites. The presentment is also inadequate in that its judgments—because of the legal restrictions applying to testimony given before grand juries—are not supported by the voluminous evidence on which they are known to be based. It is nonetheless true, as the New York *Times* said editorially, that "It [the presentment] is not a whitewash in any sense; it is a serious appraisal of a serious problem."

WHAT the ACLU report obscured and what the Grand Jury saw with entire clarity is that the Communists unveiled at Peekskill a strategical formula by which they hope to increase civil strife, to inflame the racial and religious passions and antagonisms that are already this country's shame, and in fact to play the same role in weakening this country before a foreign enemy that Nazi agents and their domestic supporters played during World War II. (What would Russia not give for news of a race riot with which to flood the air over Korea, the Near East, Indonesia, Latin America?) That the Communists pose as the chief defenders of Jewish and Negro rights forms only a deceptive distinction between them and the Nazi agents. The slogans of anti-anti-Negroism, despite the sincerity with which individual Communists may still utter them, have simply become their most effective weapons in attacking the American government and people and in weakening this country before the Soviet attack—just as anti-Semitism became the chief weapons of the Nazi propaganda offensive.

This creates enormous dangers for those who are honestly engaged in fighting anti-Semitism and anti-Negroism, and are not merely using these causes to advance the interests of a foreign power. Negro leaders like A. Philip Randolph promptly repudiated the Communist party's efforts to make the Peekskill riots appear as part of the major Negro struggle for emancipation. Similar repudiations have been made by the *Jewish Daily Forward* and by Jewish religious leaders and organizations. But as yet the Jewish community seems only vaguely aware of the full potential viciousness of the formula.

Like prayer beads on a string, the party reiterates the words: Jew, Negro, Communist—again and again until in the public's mind they become fused in an indissoluble amalgam—or so it is hoped.

On August 29, 1949, the *Daily Worker* asked editorially:

"What was the target of the Peekskill violence? The 14,000,000 members of the Negro community of the United States. But in warning the Negro people that they must submit to the planned World War III or face lynchings at home, the pro-war mob is following the pattern used by the Germans in preparing Germany for war. That pattern is to silence the nation as a whole by first assailing the Jews, the Negro people, and the Communists."

The true dimensions of the problem of Negro and Jewish rights is thus completely confused in a blaze of outrageous lies: as if realities were not difficult enough, the fighters for Negro and Jewish rights must now deal with Communist phantoms.

Paul Robeson and William L. Patterson, secretary of the Civil Rights Congress, apparently look forward with mingled dread and elation to the blood bath they predict for their people if they resist war against the USSR or her satellites. Said William L. Patterson: "The Czarist Black Hand [sic] could not have done a better job than was done in Peekskill. The Negro was to be cast in the role that the Jew played in Germany. The FBI fears that a Negro leader can be a greater threat to this country's drive against civil rights than a white leader. Negroes, quite out of proportion to their numbers, can play a role in throwing back reaction. They owe this to billions of people in the Far East, who want some force to emerge capable of challenging American reaction. The Negro is singularly blessed, because he is now prepared to play a significant role in world history."

Mr. Patterson seems to grudge the Jews their share in this destined martyrdom: "I disagree with the findings of the ACLU report that the violence was chiefly fostered by anti-Semitism," he said. "The pogrom was more against Negroes than against Jews." But the Jews will be allowed their role. After the second riot, Robeson told New York reporters: "We Negroes owe a great debt to the Jewish people, who stood by the hundreds to defend me and all of us yesterday."

A new American myth is thus being established in which Negroes, Jews, and Communists are arrayed against the rest of the country.

The myth will develop, of course, only if we are foolish enough to let it; only if we allow Jews and Negroes falsely to become identified in the public mind with Communists; if we allow Communist propaganda to convince Jews and Negroes that only the Communists have the interests of these groups at heart.

If one considers the relations of Christians and Jews in Peekskill before the riots, these two facts appear: first, that the relations between the year-round Christian and Jewish residents of Peekskill were relatively good; second, that relations between the Jewish summer residents and the Christians were practically non-existent. The curtain that separated them wasn't iron, but it let in very little light. Sociologically viewed, what the area was suffering from at the time of the riots was a severe and chronic case of country-city animosity, which neither the country nor the city people had ever tried to relieve. This lack of relations between old-timers and newcomers was the weakest link in the entire fabric of the area's social life. If, for some years before the riots, there had been as much mutual respect as obtains today between the permanent Christian residents of the area and the summer residents of the area's oldest Jewish colony, in Mohegan, the myth that all Jews are Communists could never have been taken seriously.

The Mohegan Colony Association is the oldest Jewish colony in the area. Some of its residents have lived there for a quarter of a century and are accepted as friends and natives by the country people of Cortlandt. Yet, since 1927 and continuing to today, there has been much gossip in the area about the "Communists" in Mohegan. Oliver Pilat, who wrote a series of stories on the area for the New York *Post* after the riots, said: "Mohegan Colony, originally 100 per cent Communist, is now said by political sophisticates to be 55 per cent anti-Communist." Mr. Pilat later apologized for this gross exaggeration of Communist influence, but he did not state the true facts about the Colony and its Communist members, which are these: that no one suspected of being a Communist has been admitted to the Colony since 1927; that Communists nevertheless managed to become Colony members by buying real estate from non-Communist members; that the Colony has had to take sharp measures against its crypto-Communists on several occasions; that the Communist vote on purely Colony issues has never, in the recollection of one of the oldest and most active members, exceeded 15 per cent of the membership.

These facts about Mohegan Colony were simply unknown to the natives of Peekskill—especially to those who glibly made the Communist-Jew identification. The Peekskill area does not to this day know how small the Communist contingent in the Colony is, nor how troublesome it has been to the other members of the Colony. It does know, however, that 100 members of the Colony, three days after the first riot, wrote an open letter to the *Evening Star,* saying that rioting and mob violence were repugnant to them, but that "they also objected strenuously to being used by peoples or groups whose totalitarian ideas we unqualifiedly condemn." Last Fourth of July, the fire company of the village of Mohegan, which is mainly Christian, gave half the proceeds of its annual bazaar to the United Jewish Appeal.

ONE other thing, at least, was made overwhelmingly clear by the riots and their sequels, namely, that liberals and their organizations have as yet no adequate answer to the problem created by the machinations of a group implacably devoted to the destruction of all liberty.

The approach of the American Civil Liberties Union appears to the writers to be fragmentary and negative. At no point does its report recognize the desirability of educating the public—or its own members—concerning the categorical difference between the conspiratorial anti-democratic Communist party and its fronts, and genuinely democratic political and social groups. After urging that no restrictive laws, regulations, or permit systems be established, the report asserts: "Places for meetings may be designated in the public interest, but in such cases *no distinctions whatever should be made of political views.*"

The italics are the writers'. In our opinion this recommendation was dated and inept when it was written. While the United States is grappling with quite new problems, the American Civil Liberties Union, judged by its annual reports and its handling of Peekskill, is mechanically and breathlessly answering the same old fire gong, without bothering to inquire into the nature of the new flare-ups, and without taking time to see if its equipment is effectively up to date. Such enthusiasm has been very serviceable in the past, but the world is a little less simple now.

In contrast, Cortlandt, the scene of two riots, has tried to grapple realistically with the problem of future Communist gatherings. In a series of town meetings, it passed three ordinances. The final one, which supersedes the others, was drafted by Louis Waldman, well-known labor lawyer and Croton summer resident. It guarantees freedom of speech and assembly "for lawful purposes," but imposes penalties of $100 fines and thirty-day jail sentences for participating in a meeting "held for the purpose of breaking down law enforcement or disturbing the public peace, and carried out in a manner tending to the breakdown of law enforcement or the disturbance of public peace."

At the American Civil Liberties Union's panel discussion on "Communism and the Bill of Rights," held at the Waldorf-Astoria on February 22 of this year, Mr. Waldman defended the final Cortlandt ordinance against attacks by Arthur Garfield Hays, Osmond K. Fraenkel, Professor Thomas Emerson of the Yale Law School, and Terence McCarthy, principal investigator of the Robeson riots. According to the American Civil Liberties Union's published summary of this discussion, Mr. Waldman contended that "the Bill of Rights does not advocate destruction of a government that protects the rights of citizens; neither does it guarantee protection of fifth columnists or of citizens who commit perjury or treason." The objective of the Communists, he said, is the destruction of free government and the Bill of Rights. He felt that the American Civil Liberties Union should support the government's fight against "the conspiracy of Communism," just as it would fight to protect the Bill of Rights if it were threatened from another quarter.

"What is to be done," asked Waldman, "with organizations that have a vested interest in disorder, as had the Nazis in Germany, the Fascists in Italy—as have the Stalinists everywhere?"

To this question it is not enough, it seems to us, to reply, as did Osmond K. Fraenkel in the course of the same panel discussion: "It is not the function of the ACLU to support the government in its prosecution of Communists." It is also not the function of the ACLU to assist the Communists in their planned and programmed exacerbation and exploitation of racial and religious prejudice. Yet this was the objective effect, however inadvertent, of the American Civil Liberties Union's report on the Robeson riot.

Nor is it of help to perpetuate the semantic confusions that the Communists do their best to foster. For example, consider the illogic and the dangerous verbal amalgam contained in the following sentence, which appears both in "Violence in Peekskill" and in the American Civil Liberties Union's weak and evasive reply to the Grand Jury's criticism of that document:

"The outbreak thus embodies the combined expressions of the most explosive prejudices in American life—against Communists, Negroes, and Jews."

But anti-Communism is *not* just a prejudice: it is a necessary defense reaction. Is it prejudice to identify the Communist fifth column that shook its fist at Peekskill with the totalitarian regime that is today waging an undeclared war against this country? Is it prejudice that has led the free peoples to fight under the flag of the United Nations in defense of their common liberties against totalitarian aggression?

That this defense must be conducted is a matter both of principle and of self-preservation. *How* it is conducted on the home front is a matter of tactics. The Peekskill riots provide us with a shocking example of how *not* to deal with Communist fomentation of racial and religious tension and conflict. Their sequels also provide us with a dismaying example of the intellectual confusion and tactical ineptitude of many of our professional liberals. Whether we have learned enough, soon enough, from these experiences will be demonstrated during the weeks and months immediately ahead.

THE PEOPLE OF THE WORD

Seventeen Poems

MARK VAN DOREN

And Did the Animals?

And did the animals in Noah's ark—
That was of oleander wood, with cabins
Cunningly bitumined in and out—
Did all those animals lie quietly?
For months and weeks and days, until the dove
Came home, and they were dry on Ararat,
Did every bird, with head beneath its wing,
Did every beast, with forepaws folded in,
Did every reptile, coiled upon itself,
Lie sleeping as no man did, patiently?
A man might think this tempest would not end,
Nor timbers cease to creak, nor the light come.
These did not know it rained, these did not know
Their kind survived in them if it survived.
A thinking man might doubt it, and in misery
Listen. Did they listen? But to what?
They did not know of time, they did not count
The waves. Then did they cry out in their dreams?
Or did they even dream, those specimen souls?

The Rainbow

"Though every man be evil in his mind
From the first breath of thought, I now do promise
Never again to wish all flesh destroyed,
Either by flood or fire." So Noah heard,
And wondered. Even the animals, God said,
Were safe beneath His rainbow—all poor things
With blood in them to come and go forever
As day and night did, and as winter, summer.
To live and die. Poor things, and yet His own.
So Noah wondered; and so all men since
Have said: Is it not strange, His disappointment?
For knowing all, He still knew not the deep ways
This creature most like Him was bound to go;
Or if not bound, did go, has gone, and will
Till the round earth itself no more is dreamed.

Mark Van Doren, one of America's distinguished men of letters, is professor of English at Columbia University. The latest of his numerous books, a collection of his short stories, has just been published. Mr. Van Doren was born in 1894 and studied at the University of Illinois and Columbia University. From 1924 to 1928, he was literary editor of the *Nation,* and later served as film critic for that magazine from 1935-1938. In 1940 he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his *Collected Poems.*

Is it not wonderful, men say, that even
He of the vast vision, even He
That brooded above the firmament, and fished
Each form out of the void, the desolation,
The darkness and the wind—oh, even He
Anticipated nothing. Not a soul,
They cry, but must amaze Him; so much more,
So other than His plan; all these recesses
Singing in the heart; all these volutions
Of the still motley serpent in the skull.
So all men since the rainbow, looking inward,
Have wondered at themselves; and flattered thus
The very flesh He wanted to destroy
Yet did not; for He pitied the poor thing.

The Prophet Enoch

WHO were the sons of heaven that looked down
One day and saw earth's women and desired them?
Samyaza was their captain; Asael,
Urakabarameel, Yomyael,
Saraknyal, Zavebe, and Armers
Were prefects; all in all, two hundred angels
Fell that day so deep beyond redemption,
Only the darkest desert now contains
Their bones, that still are burning as they burned
That day they saw our women, and deployed
From Armon, wooing sweet flesh in the lowlands
Where men were, and their wives, and winsome daughters
Not meant for incorruptible delight.
In both it was corruption; neither earth
Nor heaven knew this thing until that day,
When curtained beds, and mosses in the fields,
And river banks and caverns by the ocean,
Shadowy with love, conceived in shame
A progeny of giants, who devoured
Earth's animals and fruits, and would have eaten
Man himself, had not the deluge come
That cleansed us. Angel to angel, dust to dust—
Love then was true once more, as still it is,
On earth as it is in heaven. For no woman,
Wife to a man, pollutes him. And no star,
Wed to another there, wanders mistaken.
Or so the prophet Enoch says and sings.

Abraham and Isaac

A SOLITARY ram that day was growing,
That day of all days, in Moriah grass.
Thin grass, and thoughtless ram. It did not need
To think, that silly sheep with the curled horns
Held ever downward, moving on and on
As if by its own choice—for instance now,
When it came near an old man with a knife
Uplifted. Shining knife, about to fall

On a stretched boy, silent among faggots.
Silent boy, eyes open, facing up.
All of Moriah, silent. The ram moved
Again—its ultimate free act, for brushwood
Caught the curled horns. It butted, but was caught.
And the old man listened. Not to this,
But listened. Then he looked, and his hand trembled,
Suddenly, with joy. The ram was here
By no thought of its own, nor was its last act
Free. It had been destined for this day,
And lived it as it should, head ever downward,
Moving on and on, even to where
This brushwood was, that rattled. But the old man,
Listening, had not heard so near a sound.
It was God's voice that said to him, Let be.
Only that soon he looked; and sacrificed,
Instead of his one lamb, this chosen sheep.

Rebekah

Abraham's old slave, come to the well
At Nahor, seeking water for his camels
And a good wife for Isaac, found Rebekah—
Perfect in simplicity, found one
Clear girl he could thank God for, and adorn
With rings and bracelets, and at sunrise take
Forever home to be the wife of Isaac.
Whom she deceived. Rebekah in her womb
Felt twins at war, and knew that she must favor
One above the other when both lived.
She favored Jacob; and if Isaac more
Loved Esau, with the hairy hands and neck
That smelled of dewy fields, and of wild animals
And grain, being her husband he was helpless.
For the same girl it was, grown old with him,
Who tricked him now by sending Jacob in
For the blind man's unalterable blessing.
The skin of kids betrayed him, so that Esau's
Sons, by Ishmael's daughter, and by ruder
Breeds, were never children of God's line.
But Jacob walked with angels, and his son
Was Joseph. So Rebekah the deceiver
Had the same mind that Abraham's old slave
Found once as clear as water. And it was.
Even that day she knew—or did she then?—
That she was God's own virgin, born at Nahor
To visit on these men this mortal hurt.
But guilty Jacob slept and dreamed of angels.

Dinah

For Dinah ravished, all of Shechem's city
Paid with all its blood. Shechem's, too,
Its chiefest prince, who longed for Dinah so—
To keep her, whom he ravished—he could smell

No craft in Dinah's brothers till they smote
And smote, and every house, red with the horror,
Died; even Shechem's, where in silence
Dinah sat. But her they rescued. And
She wept. Was it for joy? Or walking slow,
Did Dinah weep for justice—all the blood
Of all that lover's people drying now
In sunless rooms behind her? Did she turn
And look, and was it well that Shechem's face
No longer hoped for kindness in these eyes?
For afterward-consent? Shechem's hands—
Did Dinah shudder? Nothing tells of this,
Or anything she thought that bloody day
Her brothers bore her home, and she could hear
The captive herds about her—all the sheep,
Bewildered, and the beaten asses braying.

Joseph Wept

"THE old man of whom you spoke—your father—
Is he yet living? Is he well?" Red-eyed,
The sons of Leah nodded. "And your youngest
Brother, of whom you told me—is this he?"
For Benjamin stood there, clear-lidded, beautiful,
The son of his own mother Rachel. And four more,
That maids had bred. But Benjamin alone
Was cause that Joseph went into his room
And shut the door and wept. The twelve of them—
All here, with Jacob far away in Canaan,
Starving. All together at this end
Of bitter time. For ten of them had hated
Joseph, their bright brother. Only Benjamin,
Whose blessed birth had been the death of Rachel,
Only he had not. Therefore these tears.
And yet the ten that sold him into Egypt,
The ten his dreams offended—they were cause,
And older. For he thought: I was the bright one;
I dreamed and told my dreams. I did not hide
My light in loving clouds; I did not shame
To shine full in their faces. Was it God's
Cunning and deep purpose so to cleave us
That now and here, in Egypt, a thin remnant
Of Israel might live? Nevertheless
I boasted, and despised them; thought me different,
And better. And I was. But am no more.
The dozen is made one. God's miracle
Is that we all are met—they in their garments,
Bowing, and I in mine, a gorgeous stranger,
Lofty, and their lord. Now I must go,
Must speak to them: "I am your brother Joseph;
Our father—is he well?" Then all shall weep—
I know it. Can I do this? Can I still
Not weep myself? Yet why should I not weep?
Why should there be that difference then, when none
Is here now in my heart? So half in fear

He bathed his face and opened the gold door
Between them, and sat down with them to eat.

Joseph and Jacob

IN A swift chariot, with horses jingling
The red gold of their bridle ornaments,
Joseph drove deep into the land of Goshen,
Then stopped. This might be Jacob, his old father,
Coming. And it was. The patient wagons,
The sheep, the cattle, herded by good hands,
The asses' pointed ears, and all those people—
Fifty, sixty, seventy—it was Israel
Coming. And he walked ahead to meet them,
Looking right and left for the old man
His father, who had thought him dead. "My son!
Now that I have seen you, I can die."
Here then he was, descended from the forward
Wagon. And he limped. Come all the way
From Canaan, in the desert dust, he limped—
A small old man, the socket of whose thigh
Still hurt him. And they fell upon each other,
Weeping: Joseph, vice-king of all Egypt,
In linen robes, with gold about his neck
And a great signet ring, and sons at home
By Asenath, the daughter of the priest
Of On, by whom he almost had forgotten
Israel and its woes—Joseph mingled
His tears with those of Jacob, who one night,
So long ago that only a hip remembered,
Wrestled in the dark with God's tall angel,
And won. But when the day broke over Penuel,
He limped; and ever had while Joseph dreamed
In Egypt, that rich dying land, and prospered
By famine. Now from Canaan these had come,
These many sons of Jacob, with their wives
And children. Sixty-six, the whole of Israel,
Exiled. They were desolate and poor,
But young; and they would multiply; and Joseph,
Savior of them all, would be forgotten.
Brilliant in his linen and his gold,
And welcoming their caravan with tears
And smiles, even he would be forgotten.
For he was not of them, this prince of Nile
Whom God Himself one day would scarce remember.

How Moses Saw God

"NO MAN can look upon my face and live.
My glory you may see, but not myself."
The people at the bottom of the mountain,
Nor Aaron, nor the elders, heard Jehovah
Say it, topmost there on Sinai,
Beyond the cloud whose darkness hid the truth
As thunder hatches lightning. And already

Trumpets had sounded, and already fire,
Seeming to consume itself, had smouldered,
Smouldered, then had vanished. But the mind
Of Moses heard, and his ears trembled. "Man—
I know your name—retire into that cleft
Of rock while this my glory passes by.
My hand will hold you there. Be not afraid.
It shall be more impossible to look
Than, having looked, to live. Be not afraid."
So He that was no other than He was
Passed by, and did not turn again. And Moses,
Gazing as into sunset, saw God's back;
And bowed; and fasted all of forty days
And forty nights in wonder; then went down
To his own people, waiting. Who in fear
Avoided him. For now his very skin,
As if it had been tested in a furnace,
Glowed; and they avoided him, until
He veiled himself. As thunder wraps hot lightning,
So Moses hid the truth of what he saw
On Sinai that day. No other man
Has seen as much; and even he but saw
God's back, as at the setting of all suns
That ever yet have risen or will rise.

Jephthah's Daughter

JEPHTHAH, son of a harlot, had one daughter,
Born in the land of Tob, where he with brigands
Raided the flocks and herds. But Gilead's sons,
His brothers, who had banished him, were sorry,
And sent for him to come and save them now.
"And if the Ammonites go down before me,
Then will I be your chief?" They swore it, Yes,
And armed him; and he vowed, if he were victor,
That the first living creature whom at Mizpeh
He met by his own door should die for God.
He triumphed, and rode home; and lo, this daughter
Ran to him—with tambourines and dancing
Ran to him; and wondered why he wept,
And why he tore his clothes. "My only child"—
So then she knew, and knelt. But when no blow
Descended—none was ready, in his weakness—
She cried to him: "For two months let me live.
Alone among the mountains let me wander
With my few maidens, mourning my estate."
For not one man had known her, and no man
But Jephthah would be desolate that day,
Two full moons hence, when the keen knife must fall.
If he consented gladly, did he rest then?
Did Jephthah rest? The thing was still to do.
A thousand hours, each one of them more terrible
Than this one that was over—yet not over—
How could he pass them? How did Jephthah, chieftain,
Son of a harlot, pass them? No one hears;

Or whether on the mountains she regretted,
Too, that gift of time—all those sunrises,
Powerless to prepare her for the dark arms
Of the one husband she would have at last;
And had at last; and lies with him eternally,
Mourning her bright maidenhood below.

The Ark of the Covenant

An empty box, the sons of Baal said;
Nothing inside except the mumbling words
Of one no man remembered; he had lived
On mountains long ago, and he had lighted
Israel out of Egypt; but where now,
And who, and why should any stout foe fear him?
So they abducted the acacia chest
That Moses built and overlaid with gold
Inside and out; even the rings and poles
He overlaid with gold; and placed inside it
Nothing but parchment texts of the decrees
He heard on Sinai once, and well remembered.
Nothing but those. Yet bloody death was in them
For the stout sons of Baal: plagues and tempests,
And Dagon falling down, and slaughtered thousands
Crying upon the silence; for no sword
But silence, silence killed them. So the Philistines,
Secretly, by night, sent home the terrible
Box; and the bearers listened; but no sound
Came out of it, no mumbling. It was the silence,
Silence, that had killed them. "Thou shalt have
No other gods before me." Even this
No bearer heard; for the deep sleep of faith
Was on the world that night; and if a dream
Disturbed it, Israel too shook in her bed,
Foreseeing all the shame, all the forgetting.

Last of the Judges

"Then you may have your king." And the proud people
Shouted. But they had not listened close.
They had not heard the whirlwind in his throat,
Whispering God's wrath; for now as always,
Samuel, their pure judge, was but a horn
Through which the past and future blew, and truth,
Welcome or unwelcome, hummed in the airways.
It hummed there now, and doomed them, but they laughed
And shouted. Even now, his head and shoulders
Higher than the highest, Saul was wandering
In search of lost she-asses; and became
Their king; and blundered daily; till his death
Was their death too, though David's time, succeeding,
And Solomon's, seemed blissful. But it blew,
That whirlwind, even then, and only struck
As the long sun of Israel went down
On Jeroboam raging, and the white bones

Of Jezebel, that no wild dog would eat,
Manuring the dead fields that still would mourn,
In utter darkness, hideous captivity,
While prophets groaned, and some few souls remembered
How the proud people once had wanted kings;
Thrice warned, had wanted kings; and here they had them;
And the hoarse words of Samuel, and the lost love
Of God were but as desert lamentations
In a cold corner of the night as far
Away and long ago as Abraham.

Michal

MICHAL, that she-wife whom David had
For his first comforter, from Saul her father—
But then in fury Saul withdrew the gift—
Michal was another man's awhile;
Was Paltiel's; till David, king himself,
Remembered, and he sent for her by Abner.
Instantly she started—with what words
And what goodbyes to Paltiel we know not,
Or whether with embraces. Yet we know
This husband followed, weeping all the way
And watching—all the bleak way to Bahurim
Watching David's wife who was his own,
His own. And yet no longer. So the dust
Was bitter that he breathed; till at Bahurim
Abner, looking down, said "Go, return";
And Paltiel returned. But Michal went
Straight on, the bitter wind sweet in her nostrils,
To where the king was whom another day,
When both of them were older, she would scorn
For dancing in an apron, by the ark
Of God. And he would hate her till she died.
And she would bear no children, either his
Or Paltiel's, until she groaned and died.

Abigail

SHE met him in a wild pass of the mountains—
David, whom she called her lord, and said:
"I bring you bread and wine, I bring you raisins.
Sheep I bring, and corn, and cakes of figs.
Accept all these, my lord; I am your servant;
I save you from bloodguilt. For you are bound
Where Nabal is, my husband, who insulted
Certain of your soldiers. Do not kill him.
Nabal's very name, my lord, is Fool.
Then do not kill him. When my lord is king,
What pity if a fool's blood blights his conscience.
I am your servant, saving you." He looked,
Beautiful himself, upon her beauty,
And said: "So shall it be. Blessed are you
That kept me from revenge. I would have killed him,
Surely. Go in peace." And David left her.

Then was it with his beauty in her heart
That she went straight to Nabal, who was drunk,
And told him of the danger there had been,
So that his spirit sank in him, like stone,
And in ten days he died? For she was ready
At Carmel when those messengers came in
With word that David wanted her for wife.
She mounted up at once and rode to him,
And married him forever, and forgot—
Or did you, Abigail, that first one's fall?

Bathsheba

When Bathsheba, grown old, one day had audience
With David who was dying—she must speak
For Solomon, their son, against the danger
Of Adonijah's coming to be king—
Abishag was there. But Bathsheba
Looked elsewhere; only warned of Adonijah,
Then went as she had come. Did she remember,
Did Bathsheba remember, worlds ago,
Being Uriah's wife whom David saw
On the hot roof, in sun and shadow bathing?
The shadows were against the one great eye
That burned there, and the little ones of men—
On which reflecting, she grew warm with shame;
And turned; and someone told her David saw.
The great eye now was his; the sun went out
In worlds of heat that builded unto heaven—
Save that it was not heaven. For Uriah
Died in war, by David's word, and God
Was not well pleased. And yet they lived,
Those lovers; were the king, the queen; and Solomon
Lived next, whom Adonijah on this day
Threatened to unthrone. So Bathsheba
Spoke only of their son; not of the beautiful
Abishag who stood beside the bed,
And every night lay in it, on the bosom
Of the cold king, whom fleeces could not comfort,
Nor silks, nor the far fire. Only this maiden,
Beautiful as blood, sustained his heart
As once Uriah's wife did, worlds away
And wars ago. So David listened, shivering,
Till Bathsheba retired, and dark came down,
And Abishag lay curled inside his long cloak
Like a warm worm in leaves. While Bathsheba,
Alone, with no eye on her, God's or man's,
Sat wondering at this moonlight in the room,
And yet no moon. Was it his mind, remembering,
And following, and feeling her poor warmth?

Sarah of Ecbatana

Tobias, son of Tobit, felt desire
For Sarah, the sad daughter of Raguel,
Before he ever saw her. Could this be?
She was of his people, far away,
And destined for him, Azariah said;
And beautiful, and sensible; but sad
Because of seven bridegrooms she had lost
On seven wedding nights—a demon's work,
Not hers, although the maids accused her so.
The angel Azariah said: "Go up
To her, Tobias, and possess her without fear;
For she is yours, and was from the beginning;
Pray with her, then draw the curtains close,
And sleep all night; I tell you it is well."
And so Tobias, with obedient heart,
Was full of love for Sarah long before
He ever saw Ecbatana, her city.
She was of his people; and was beautiful,
And sensible; and wanted to be dead
Because she did not know the very boy
Was coming who could save her, and whose bride
In truth, not lust, she was from the beginning.
So Azariah said, whose other name
Was Raphael; and obedient Tobias
Eagerly walked with him all the way.

The Word

The people whom He chose to hear His word
Had the one mind that could remember it.
And with what heat they did, until captivity
Cooled them. Or it seemed to. For their voice,
Grown inward now, repeated not to deserts
Nor the wind ears of aliens what they knew
Of further things unfolded, of the hidden
Person who was coming—always coming,
And they alone knew why. Yet knew not when.
For the one people He could trust with truth
Had then this terrible, this inward duty
Forever to deny it. He must fail
Who came. Or seem to fail. Oh, the dark word
That in their long captivity they warmed,
Lest truth itself grow cold and die—oh, word,
Oh, wonder, it is still by their surviving
Saved; and by their silence, that keeps warm
And dark the word that too much sun would kill.

HOW TO CHECKMATE STALIN IN ASIA

An American Policy Geared to Chinese Realities

KARL A. WITTFOGEL

THE great debate on American foreign policy in Asia still continues, even while the Korean war is being fought. The ultimate *aim* of our foreign policy in Asia has never been in serious question: to halt or reverse the catastrophic Communist advance which has already conquered China and which today threatens Korea, Formosa, Indo-China, the Philippines, Malaya, Burma, and ultimately all of Asia. The question remains, *how* may we halt the Communist advance in Asia? What weaknesses can we find in the Communist camp, what friends may we build up, by what means may we secure them?

The first thing we have to understand is the nature of the new regime that now rules China's 450,000,000 people, and threatens the ring of peoples on China's eastern and southern borders as yet free of Communist domination. For many years, American public opinion, and the opinion of a number of American top policy makers as well, labored under serious misconceptions concerning the Chinese Communists. Mao Tse-tung's rise to power, and his actions since, dispelled the legend that his was essentially a party of "agrarian reformers." But another comforting illusion soon arose to muddle thinking. The new Communist regime would, it was said, need a breathing spell. It had to take stock of its assets and needs; the dust had to settle; and the tasks of reconstruction were many and time-consuming. For the moment, many people felt, Communist China could conveniently be relegated to the background—and this notion was all the more tempting since urgent questions in other parts of the world were demanding attention.

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But those who believed that the government of an exhausted country would have to underwrite a policy of peace, out of concern for the welfare of its subjects, projected onto the authoritarian regime of Communist China—and for that matter, of the USSR—political considerations which bind only democratically-controlled governments. Instead of settling down peacefully and constructively, the new masters of Chinese society, immediately after their victory at home and despite serious disasters of flood and famine, engaged in political and military activities abroad designed to prevent the establishment of peaceful conditions in Asia. They are giving arms to the Communist forces in Indo-China; they are openly preparing to annex Tibet; and the massing of large military forces on the border of North Korea poses a threat of possible intervention in case of major North Korean reverses. The serious possibility of a military conflict between the newly established Communist regime of China and the non-Communist members of the UN reveals how completely erroneous was the hope that the victory of the Chinese Communists would, rather than proving a threat to peace, turn out uncomfortably for Stalin, who supposedly had bitten off more than he could chew.

THE Chinese Communists, we can now finally agree, are genuine Communists in the Soviet sense of the term, animated by similar deals, and driven by the same expansive urges; and, moreover, bound by many strong ties to the Soviet Union. Once we understand this, we will avoid new illusions in the future, or rather new versions of the same illusions that have bedeviled us in the past. For the root misconception of the character of the Chinese Communists—that they are revolutionaries of a simple, national type shaking off the bonds of "feudalism"—is responsible for past errors and lies at the heart of the newest hope: that somehow, soon, the Chinese Communists, since they are by nature different from their Russian counterparts, will break with Moscow, and, like Chiang after Canton, or Tito in Yugoslavia, go their own way. To my mind, any such hope totally misjudges the strength of the basic links that bind Mao to Stalin.

Ideological Affinities: In the Communist movement, ideology (the integrated total of "scientifically" established ideas) plays a role which is not always fully appreciated. For tactical reasons, Communist ideology may be changed overnight with utter contempt for logic and consistency. But such changes affect only the outer layers. The inner core is held to tenaciously and fanatically; it provides the Communist fighter with a "rational" (economic, social, and political) analysis both of his own world and of the world of the enemy. It provides him with a chart of his present and future battlefields. Assembling the experiences of many former struggles, Soviet ideology further constitutes an elaborate strategic and tactical arsenal. As a "guide to action" it tells the owners of the chart how to move with the maximal chance of success on the scenes of future combat.

In addition to fulfilling these functions, Soviet ideology serves a vital psychological purpose. It depicts Communist warfare as a gigantic crusade to replace the present bad (class) society by a superior (and classless) world. It thus offers a powerful political myth inspiring those who accept it with the greatest confidence and paralyzing those individuals in the enemy camp who are impressed by it.

The Chinese Communists, through their participation in the Communist International, were exposed for several decades to the ideas of Lenin, Stalin, and, to a lesser degree, Marx. Any objective examination of the texts of the speeches and writings of Mao Tse-tung and other leading Chinese Communists will reveal no significant deviation from the tenets of Soviet ideology.

Organizational and Personal Affinities: The Chinese Communist party was built on the Bolshevik model. It was an integral part of the Communist International until that body's voluntary "dissolution" in 1943. The structural similarity of the Chinese party to the Russian parent organization and to its many other Asiatic and non-Asiatic affiliates creates important likenesses in behavior and psychology.

The leading members of the various Communist parties are attached to the Moscow center and to each other by big stakes and unique personal experiences. Apparently, the Chinese Communist party sent a particularly large number of persons to be trained in party and GPU schools in the USSR.

Institutional Affinities: Before the Communists of a given country have seized power, only the ideological, organizational, and personal ties matter. After a new Communist government is established, we must add to these ties new affinities that derive from profound similarities in position and interest.

The new ruling class in the Soviet Union has destroyed the members of the old propertied classes economically and in large part physically. It has broken the backbone of small property in the persons of the independent peasant cultivators; and, after an initial period of seeming proletarian supremacy, it has also forced the working class into line. Other Communist parties that have attained absolute power have, with appropriate regional modifications, followed the Russian pattern in destroying their propertied classes and in subduing their peasants and workers. Those Western politicians who consider the difference between our way of life and that of the new Communist societies in Russia and China as being "only" ideological, not only misunderstand the role that such subjective factors as ideology and personal attachment play in the Communist orbit, but also overlook the crucial differences distinguishing the Communist from the non-Communist world as a result of the violent elimination or repression of whole social strata.

The masters of the new state "apparatus" in Communist countries understand these differences thoroughly. Moreover, they realize clearly that their rise to power and the policies they have initiated have set them off from the entire non-Communist world. Their enmity to the forces they have partly crushed and which they intend to destroy completely establishes a tie of complicity that binds them to each other and to all those who join them in promoting the Communist system of despotic rule, managerial-totalitarianism, and absolute police terror. This tie is in turn cemented by their fear of the reprisals of a profoundly different and potentially hostile world. But this last negative tie is outweighed by a positive identification of purpose and procedure.

The Chinese Communists needed no Russian command to whet their appetite for power. It was in their interest to learn from their Russian comrades whatever could be learned about revolutionary strategy and techniques —revolutionary, that is, so far as the wholesale destruction of the traditional system of government and property and the establishment of a monopolistic organization of power are concerned. The Chinese Communists' alignment with the USSR was thus in no sense against their own interests. To be sure, they sacrificed vital interests of the Chinese people as a whole; and they subordinated important aims of the Chinese party and state to Soviet strategy. But as a political group that represents a gigantic complex of new vested interests, the Chinese Communists made these sacrifices expecting to profit enormously from their close associations with the USSR. And certainly—so far—the balance sheet shows a substantial profit and only minor losses to the new rulers of China.

This recital of similarities should not lead us to overlook the substantial and crucial differences between the experiences of the Chinese and of the Russian Communists, and the European Communists in general; but here too the balance favors a continuing affiliation rather than conflict. Since Chinese society was much less successful in evolving Western and democratic forms of life than was czarist Russia, the Chinese Communists had no competition from pre-existing democratic and liberal forces. So we find that the majority of the Chinese students greeted the Communist victory much more enthusiastically than the Russian students of 1917 and after, who were extremely reluctant to give up their dream—part reality— of a democratic Western development. Further, the dynamic and growing government had many new positions to offer that represented inducements to Chinese intellectuals to go over to the Communist regime.

The temporary withdrawal of the Chinese Communists to the countryside meant that, during the early phases of sovietization in Kiangsi and Shensi, they did not have to support large metropolitan and industrial centers, a necessity which in Russia soon after 1917 aroused strong peasant resentment against the new Bolshevik regime. The final occupation of the big cities of China and the need to feed a large officialdom and a still larger army have since led to an oppressive tax policy. But this late development will only gradually overcome the favorable effects produced by the fact that the Chinese Communist power system arose and grew in a rural environment.

These internal sources of strength, combined with the simple fact of China's enormous expanse and populousness, have combined to give the People's Republic of China the status of an ally rather than a satellite of the USSR; and the two states are like the poles of a gigantic Communist super-axis, with Russia the senior partner, China the junior partner, and the Communist tie decisive for the intensity and hierarchical structure of the relation.

On the basis of this review of similarities and differences, we are in a position to evaluate the most important perspective that now seems to be guiding America's tentative and as yet experimental policy in Asia: the hope that the two Communist titans will drift apart, that Mao will become a Chinese Tito.

We know now that the ideological, organizational, personal, and institutional ties binding Tito's Yugoslavia and Soviet Russia were stretched beyond the breaking point. The domineering arrogance of Stalin's military and civil advisers and his omnipresent intelligence service are resented by all the satellite countries; in Yugoslavia this led to a complete break with the "workers' homeland": can we look forward to a similar development in China?

I think not, and because of the following special factors obtaining in the relations between Russia and China:

(1) China's Communist leaders, as we have just indicated, are in a much stronger position than the leaders of the satellite countries were. Superficially, this might be seen as favoring a break. Actually, it seems to have meant to date that Russia has felt it must be especially sensitive and respectful to China, far more than it was to Yugoslavia.

(2) The masters of the Kremlin will be all the more careful to avoid in China the excesses committed in Yugoslavia simply because they will have before them the results of their Yugoslavian policy. Just as the British lost only one major colony—the United States—and were ever afterwards careful not to antagonize any colony to the point of open conflict, so I believe Stalin, and those who succeed him, will be more than eager to limit their losses to Yugoslavia.

(3) Combined with China's special strength, as against Yugoslavia, there is a special vulnerability that may be important in holding China in line if relations between the two Communist powers should deteriorate. Yugoslavia had no common border with the USSR, while it did join, on its western and northern frontiers, areas occupied by Western troops. Communist China does not enjoy these advantages. Manchuria, China's Ruhr and most important industrial center, is cradled by Soviet territory, Soviet communications, and Soviet armies—and the invasion routes into Manchuria have been tested many times by Russian soldiers in the past fifty years.

But important as these factors are, they are probably outweighed by a consideration which has received little attention: that is, the perspective of an unavoidable world conflagration.

To Mao and his colleagues, steeped as they are in Communist ideology, an Armageddon between the Communist and capitalist worlds appears far more certain than even to us who daily fear its outbreak. The conviction as to the permanent hostility between the capitalistic West and the Communist camp belongs among the most firmly held articles of Soviet theory. The Chinese Communists surrendered their independence of thought earlier than many other non-Russian parties; by 1928 they had wholeheartedly accepted the main concepts of Soviet theory; among other things, they repeatedly stated their belief in the inevitability of a final war to the death between the two worlds.

Could China remain neutral in such a war? A Communist China that severs its ties to the USSR and sits on the sidelines when war comes would keep itself from being immediately involved in a collapse of the Russian power system. But Mao's ideological prejudices could permit him no hope that the allied Western forces would tolerate another Communist order in the Far East for any length of time, once they were strong enough to break the backbone of Soviet power.

A Russian victory would prove even more disastrous for a neutral Communist China. The Chinese Communist leaders, like all higher-ranking members of the Communist world hierarchy, probably have few illusions regarding the Kremlin's generosity. A Soviet regime that succeeded in winning the global war would certainly be quick to discredit and eventually liquidate the Chinese Communist leaders responsible for a policy of neutrality.

The active participation of Communist China on the Soviet side would, on the other hand, obviously strengthen the chances of a Communist victory. To be sure, this in turn might also perpetuate China's subordination to the Russian heartland; but in their role of major junior partner, the Chinese Communists would consider their basic interests secure for any foreseeable future.

China's choice seems all the more certain when we consider its own probable estimate of the military potentials of the two camps. The conflict between Tito and Stalin may well have been aggravated by Tito's doubts concerning a Soviet victory in the event of a third world war, but from the Chinese angle the world picture looks very different. The same Soviet industry which, measured by the standards of Poland and Czechoslovakia, is inefficient and wasteful, appears much more impressive to the Chinese, when compared with their own economic conditions. Russian military might is similarly two-faced. Many Poles still remember the Soviet defeat of 1920, and Russia's weaknesses in the Finnish War of 1940 were an unhappy surprise to Stalin's friends. In the Far East, however, the Soviet army has a much more impressive record. During the 30's it stood up well against Japanese border garrisons; and the Japanese were concerned about the Soviet Far Eastern armies until the collapse of their empire. The perspective of a Soviet system rapidly increasing its economic power and becoming militarily superior to the West seems entirely reasonable to a Chinese Communist.

I do not mean to suggest that Mao would lightly go to war against the United States: however, there seems very little likelihood of his preferring a rapprochement with America to his present affiliations.

THE Titoist interpretation of Communist China has, in the main, been put forth by three groups. The first consists of persons who, without sympathy for any Soviet-promoted system of power, stress the peculiarities of the Chinese national character. They believe that the Chinese are Chinese first and Communists afterward, and as extreme individualists will never tolerate a rigid system of state control.

The second group to uphold the Titoist interpretation are worried supporters of the Soviet regime. They are disappointed by the police-state methods invoked in the USSR: and they hope that the Chinese Communists, who in Yenan appeared to move so gently, will evolve a more humane version of that socialist system which in Russia took such a brutal form.

The third group consists of undercover partisans of Soviet power. They use the Titoist arguments to recommend material and diplomatic support of Communist China, hoping by such a ruse to win benefits not only for Mao's regime, but for the Communist power of the USSR and Eastern Europe as well.

Members of the first group make a faulty generalization from some valid details. Individualistic behavior has indeed been conspicuous in traditional China both among the scholarly officialdom and the commoners, expressing as it does the competitive trends within the ruling bureaucracy on the one hand and within the private-property-based occupational groups on the other. But these manifestations of individualism operate within the framework of a complex Oriental society which even under the impact of the West was never able to rid itself of its Orientally despotic government. This government, which was stronger than all other forces in society, succeeded in constructing, by means of corvée labor, the greatest wall and the longest canal known to history. The Chinese peasants, their individualism notwithstanding, proved no different from the peasants of all Oriental countries in providing the mass labor base for practically all large-scale public works executed at the command of their autocratic rulers. Thus individualism and subordination are not incompatible; and a policy that builds its Titoist expectations on the former, without recognizing the strength of the latter, is obviously unsound.

Those who place their hopes in a better (Titoist) brand of sovietism in China do not understand the fundamentally non-socialist character of both the new Russian society and the new Communist society being built up in China. They may be disturbed when they see in China the growth of new political and social strata similar to those that developed in the USSR. But since they cling to their blind faith that both societies are basically socialist, they cannot be shaken by any reference to what they themselves call a deplorable but temporary degeneration. For all their criticisms, their position is in the final analysis not different from that of the outright defenders of the Soviet line.

The members of the third group are, for all practical purposes, beyond the reach of honest argument. Moving skilfully and resorting systematically to double-talk, they do much to confuse non-Communist opinion on the Chinese issue.

I HAVE discussed Titoist and quasi-Titoist arguments at some length because they have influenced certain aspects of our Chinese policy in the past and may do so in the future. Obviously, the calculated judgment—and that of course is all we can make—that Communist China is strongly bound to Russia, and is not likely to sever its ties with the USSR in favor of friendship with the United States, will not tell us how to act at every critical point. But, in my opinion, it is fundamental to any realistic decisions.

As to the immediate issues we face, our policy should be one of flexible firmness, with no illusions that China will fall into our hands like a ripe plum. Any public actions based on such hopes would be sure to be interpreted as weakness on our part, and would only encourage the Chinese Communist leaders to intensify their aggressive actions against the non-Communist countries of Asia. Our long-range policy with Communist China, as with the Soviet Union, should be to harbor no hopes as to the possibility of winning it as a friend or ally—but to halt and contain Mao's expansionism.

First, as to the Korean question: We should indicate to China as strongly as possible (as President Truman already in some measure has) that for her to enter the war would mean serving only Russia's interest, while she herself would suffer crippling aerial blows to her limited industries and important reconstruction projects, without succeeding in involving us in an endless land warfare.

Second, on the Formosa question: We should not hand over the island to the Chinese in the hope of deterring them from supporting the North Koreans. It should be left up to the UN to take up the question of Formosa, as part and parcel of a general Far Eastern peace settlement.

Third, we must make clear to Communist China that her admission to the UN must serve to advance peace and not as another opportunity for furthering conflict in Asia. The Chinese Communists must therefore demonstrate their willingness to stop interfering in the internal affairs of the non-Communist countries of Asia. The Communist trade union center which has been set up in Peking is an overtly organized step to this end. In addition, Peking is encouraging the aggressive actions of the Communists in all parts of Asia by political direction and also materially, as in Indo-China. Only by abandoning such interference will the Chinese Communists make clear their intention to use their UN membership to help bring about peace in Asia.

Similar assurances should be requested regarding Tibet. Tibet has its own national and cultural history; and for a long period of time its ties to China have been loose; and Chinese Communists need to show by word and deed that they have no imperialistic design to include Tibet in their power system.

Fourth, our recognition of China, if granted as a matter of expediency, should only be given in a form that does not constitute an unequal treaty from the standpoint of our official representatives or from that of other American nationals who have dealings with Communist China. In the past, the Chinese have vigorously fought all political arrangements that placed their citizens in an inferior position vis-à-vis the citizens of other contracting countries. Their objections were certainly justified. Today we must insist with the same vigor that no privileges of sojourn or movement be granted to the diplomatic representatives, businessmen, or students of a recognized Communist China (or, for that matter, of any other recognized country within the orbit of Soviet control) that are not granted to our own citizens. Recent steps taken in this direction show that our policy makers are increasingly aware of the absurdity, not to say danger, of such unequal arrangements.

Fifth, the problem of material aid to China, now proposed by certain liberals, can, like all related questions, be responsibly solved only when Communist China is realistically viewed as a quasi-Soviet society and the junior member of the Kremlin-dominated axis. There is no doubt that the Chinese Communists would be delighted to get whatever Western money and industrial equipment they could lay their hands on. But there is no doubt, too, that they would consider it suicidal to buy short-term economic advantages at the cost of their long-term Communist political and economic aims. During the time of the NEP, Lenin was ready to accept any loan and make many concessions but none that would threaten the power of the young and weak Soviet Republic. The Chinese Communists of 1950 are no less power-conscious. To assume that they would sell for cash their tie to the most powerful political and military state of the Eurasian heartland—a state that happens to have the closest political and ideological affinity to their own regime—is a simple-minded caricature of the economic interpretation of history.

Realizing the absurdity of the cash argument, we should resort to a politically focused and integrated aid to the non-Communist countries of Asia.

But our policy on these immediate questions of detail is less important than the development of an over-all long-range policy that will make permanent and secure friends for us in Asia. Whatever the firmness and success with which we deal with Communist China, we will still not solve the problem of the war in Indo-China, the Huk rebellion in the Philippines, the Communist rebellion in Burma, the steady Communist pressure on India—and the Middle East.

The case of China has demonstrated to us the intimate connection between political fortunes in Asia and economic and social policies. The Communists appeal to the rural poor of Asia by promising them land and by actually distributing land to them after they have attained power with village support. But such an agrarian policy results in permanent benefit for the poor peasant only if the state that does the initial distributing is genuinely interested in protecting the newly acquired property of its rural subjects, and this is neither the theory nor practice of Leninism-Stalinism. The small landed property which the Communists establish during the critical period of their struggle for power is declared "reactionary" and hostile as soon as the total state apparatus is consolidated. Then it is said to be the right and even the historic duty of the masters of the new apparatus to subordinate the peasants to a collective political economy which deprives them of the proprietary advantages they temporarily enjoyed.

The total collectivization which took place in the USSR shows this process clearly; and the present purposeful advance toward collectivization in satellite Eastern Europe confirms it. In the light of these developments, Mao Tse-tung's avowed preparations for a "socialist" Chinese rural economy point in one direction and in one direction only. As soon as the Chinese Communists are strong enough, they will use their power to gain control over all land and over the country's entire production, agricultural as well as industrial. And they will do so quoting Lenin and Stalin, just as they did when, for strategic reasons, land was distributed to the rural poor.

The lessons to be learned from all this are vital. Chiang Kai-shek's failure to carry out the land reform which Sun Yat-sen considered imperative was a decisive factor in swinging peasant sympathy to the Communists. When the Communists conquered China, they immediately distributed the land. The Communists implemented a land reform in North Korea as early as March 1946, while in South Korea the reform of 1948 affected only former Japanese property. The more comprehensive general reform of June 1949, passed after considerable American prodding of a pro-landlord government, was not yet put into force when the war began.

Yet a policy of radical agrarian change need be no monopoly of the Kremlin-dominated world; we can do as much, indeed we can do better. In postwar Japan, a comprehensive land reform which satisfied the peasants was carried out in October 1946 almost as early as the North Korean reform. Non-Communist political leadership can satisfy the grievances of the poor peasants of Asia, and can do so without a hidden plan for destroying the newly acquired gains as soon as state power permits.

But the Asiatic peasants do not yet know this: first, because comprehensive reforms have been carried out so far only in Japan; everywhere else, we have allowed ourselves to be stymied by governments representing the age-old forces of Asiatic reaction. And, second, because our accomplishments have not been given the publicity they need. America has finally come to realize that national freedom is one of the irrepressible desires of the Asiatic peoples; it does not yet realize that need for economic reform, particularly agrarian reform, is equally irrepressible and will lead to catastrophe unless we act decisively and quickly wherever we can.

This means, first of all, that we must take steps to implement the law of June 1949 in South Korea, wherever we hold territory. The South Korean and UN forces have had to conduct a war without the advantages that almost certainly would have accrued from an economically and psychologically consolidated countryside. In addition, we should systematically propagandize in Asia the fundamental reforms which we carried through in Japan and initiated in South Korea.

Wherever the need for radical agrarian and political reforms exists in a non-Communist Asiatic country—and this need exists in the Philippines, in parts of Indo-China, and elsewhere—there we should use all our influence to see that such reforms are initiated and implemented. Will this influence be effective against the powerful groups of landlords and their governmental allies? We have seen that these groups can be tremendously obstinate, and yet I believe that the United States, as the dispenser of such important military and economic aid, should be able, if it feels the matter is sufficiently important, to effectively promote these essential economic reforms.

THE villages of Asia cannot be defended or liberated by military means alone. It is the appeal (or the lack of appeal) to the peasants which, to a large extent, decides whether the forces of democracy will meet with cooperation and sympathy or with resistance and hostility. The Communist land distributions are poorly countered if we ignore them. To reiterate, they can be effectively countered only if we confront the insecure and temporary Communist land distribution in Asia and Eastern Europe with the sincere and politically secure reforms which we carried out in Japan. Once we do this, we are on the way to winning the Korean or any other Asiatic peasant as our friend—and as an invaluable ally both during the period of fighting and in the subsequent time of peace and reconstruction. Other democratic reforms, political and economic, are, of course, also necessary, but in an essentially agricultural continent such as Asia, the land question is paramount.

For a number of years—very critical years, unfortunately—those responsible for America's China policy did not clearly comprehend the nature of the Chinese Communist movement, and of the measures that alone could counter it. China, tragically for both the Chinese and us, must now be written off —for many years to come. But clear thinking and bold action may yet save the rest of Asia.

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THE AFTERMATH OF NAZI RULE

Report from Germany

HANNAH ARENDT

IN LESS than six years Germany laid waste the moral structure of Western society, committing crimes that nobody would have believed possible, while her conquerors buried in rubble the visible marks of more than a thousand years of German history. Then into this devastated land, truncated by the Oder-Neisse borderline and hardly able to sustain its demoralized and exhausted population, streamed millions of people from the Eastern provinces, from the Balkans and from Eastern Europe, adding to the general picture of catastrophe the peculiarly modern touches of physical homelessness, social rootlessness, and political rightlessness. The wisdom of Allied policy in expelling all German-speaking minorities from non-German countries—as though there was not enough homelessness in the world already—may be doubted. But the fact is that European peoples who had experienced the murderous demographic politics of Germany during the war were seized with horror, even more than with wrath, at the very idea of having to live together with Germans in the same territory.

The sight of Germany's destroyed cities and the knowledge of German concentration and extermination camps have covered Europe with a cloud of melancholy. Together, they have made the memory of the last war more poignant and more persistent, the fear of future wars more actual. Not the "German problem," insofar as it is a national one within the comity of European nations, but the *nightmare* of Germany in its physical, moral, and political ruin has become almost as decisive an element in the general atmosphere of European life as the Communist movements.

But nowhere is this nightmare of destruction and horror less felt and less talked about than in Germany itself. A lack of response is evident everywhere, and it is difficult to say whether this signifies a half-conscious refusal to yield to grief or a genuine inability to feel. Amid the ruins, Germans mail each other picture postcards still showing the cathedrals and market places, the public buildings and bridges that no longer exist. And the indifference with which they walk through the rubble has its exact counterpart in the absence of mourning for the dead, or in the apathy with which they react, or rather fail to react, to the fate of the refugees in their midst. This general lack of emotion, at any rate this apparent heartlessness, sometimes covered over with cheap sentimentality, is only the most conspicuous outward symptom of a deep-rooted, stubborn, and at times vicious refusal to face and come to terms with what really happened.

INDIFFERENCE, and the irritation that comes when indifference is challenged, can be tested on many intellectual levels. The most obvious experiment is to state *expressis verbis* what the other fellow has noticed from the beginning of the conversation, namely, that you are a Jew. This is usually followed by a little embarrassed pause; and then comes—not a personal question, such as "Where did you go after you left Germany?"; no sign of sympathy, such as "What happened to your family?"—but a deluge of stories about how Germans have suffered (true enough, of course, but beside the point); and if the object of this little experiment happens to be educated and intelligent, he will proceed to draw up a balance between German suffering and the suffering of others, the implication being that one side cancels the other and

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we may as well proceed to a more promising topic of conversation. Similarly evasive is the standard reaction to the ruins. When there is any overt reaction at all, it consists of a sigh followed by the half-rhetorical, half-wistful question, "Why must mankind always wage wars?" The average German looks for the causes of the last war not in the acts of the Nazi regime, but in the events that led to the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

SUCH an escape from reality is also, of course, an escape from responsibility. In this the Germans are not alone; all the peoples of Western Europe have developed the habit of blaming their misfortunes on some force out of their reach: it may be America and the Atlantic Pact today, the legacy of Nazi occupation tomorrow, and history in general every day of the week. But this attitude is more pronounced in Germany, where the temptation to blame everything under the sun on the occupying powers is difficult to resist: in the British zone everything is blamed on British fear of German competition; in the French zone on French nationalism; and in the American zone, where things are better in every respect, on American ignorance of the European mentality. The complaints are only natural, and they all contain a kernel of truth; but behind them is a stubborn unwillingness to make use of the many possibilities left to German initiative. This is perhaps most clearly revealed in the German newspapers, which express all their convictions in a carefully cultivated style of *Schadenfreude,* malicious joy in ruination. It is as though the Germans, denied the power to rule the world, had fallen in love with impotence as such, and now find a positive pleasure in contemplating international tensions and the unavoidable mistakes that occur in the business of governing, regardless of the possible consequences for themselves. Fear of Russian aggression does not necessarily result in an unequivocal pro-American attitude, but often leads to a determined neutrality, as though it were as absurd to take sides in the conflict as it would be to take sides in an earthquake. The awareness that neutrality will not change one's fate makes it in turn impossible to translate this mood into a rational policy, and the mood itself, by its very irrationality, becomes even more bitter.

BUT, whether faced or evaded, the realities of Nazi crimes, of war and defeat, still visibly dominate the whole fabric of German life, and the Germans have developed various devices for dodging their shocking impact.

The reality of the death-factories is transformed into a mere potentiality: Germans did only what others are capable of doing (with many illustrative examples, of course) or what others will do in the near future; therefore, anybody who brings up this topic is *ipso facto* suspected of self-righteousness. In this context, Allied policy in Germany is frequently explained as a campaign of successful revenge, even though it later turns out that the German who offers this interpretation is quite aware that most of the things he complains of were either the immediate consequence of the lost war or happened outside the will and control of the Western powers. But the insistence that there must be a careful scheme of revenge serves as a consoling argument, demonstrating the equal sinfulness of all men.

The reality of the destruction that surrounds every German is dissolved into a reflective but not very deep-rooted self-pity, easily dissipated when ugly little one-story structures that might have been imported from some Main Street in America spring up on some of the great avenues to conceal fragmentarily the grimness of the landscape, and to offer an abundance of provincial elegance in super-modern display windows. In France and Great Britain, people feel a greater sadness about the relatively few landmarks destroyed in the war than the Germans do for all their lost treasures together. The boastful hope is expressed in Germany that the country will become the "most modern" in Europe; yet it is mere talk, and some person who has just voiced that hope will insist a few minutes later, at another turn in the conversation, that the next war will do to all European cities what this one did to Germany's—which of course is possible, but signifies again only the transformation of reality into potentiality. The undertone of satisfaction that one often detects in the Germans' talk about the next war expresses no sinister renewal of German plans of conquest, as so many observers have maintained, but is only another device for escaping reality: in an eventual equality of destruction, the German situation would lose its acuteness.

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But perhaps the most striking and frightening aspect of the German flight from reality is the habit of treating facts as though they were mere opinions. For example, the question of who started the last war, by no means a hotly debated issue, is answered by a surprising variety of opinions. An otherwise quite normally intelligent woman in Southern Germany told me that the Russians had begun the war with an attack on Danzig; this is only the crudest of many examples. Nor is this transformation of facts into opinions restricted to the war question; in all fields there is a kind of gentlemen's agreement by which everyone has a right to his ignorance under the pretext that everyone has a right to his opinion—and behind this is the tacit assumption that opinions really do not matter. This is a very serious thing, not only because it often makes discussion so hopeless (one does not ordinarily carry a reference library along everywhere), but primarily because the average German honestly believes this free-for-all, this nihilistic relativity about facts, to be the essence of democracy. In fact, of course, it is a legacy of the Nazi regime.

The lies of totalitarian propaganda are distinguished from the normal lying of non-totalitarian regimes in times of emergency by their consistent denial of the importance of facts in general: all facts can be changed and all lies can be made true. The Nazi impress on the German mind consists primarily in a conditioning whereby reality has ceased to be the sum total of hard inescapable facts and has become a conglomeration of ever-changing events and slogans in which a thing can be true today and false tomorrow. This conditioning may be precisely one of the reasons for the surprisingly few traces of any lasting Nazi indoctrination, as well as for an equally surprising lack of interest in the refuting of Nazi doctrines. What one is up against is not indoctrination but the incapacity or unwillingness to distinguish altogether between fact and opinion. A discussion about the events of the Spanish Civil War will be conducted on the same level as a discussion of the theoretical merits and shortcomings of democracy.

Thus the problem at the German universities is not so much to reintroduce freedom to teach as to reestablish honest research, to confront the student with an unbiased account of what actually happened, and to eliminate the teachers who have become incapable of doing so. The danger to German academic life is not only from those who hold that freedom of speech should be exchanged for a dictatorship in which a single unfounded, irresponsible opinion would acquire a monopoly over all others, but equally from those who ignore facts and reality and establish their private opinions, not necessarily as the only right ones, but as opinions that are as justified as others.

The unreality and irrelevance of most of these opinions, as compared with the grim relevance of the experience of those who hold them, is sharply underlined by their having been formed before 1933. There is an almost instinctive urge to take refuge in the thoughts and ideas one held before anything compromising had happened. The result is that while Germany has changed beyond recognition—physically and psychologically—people talk and behave superficially as though absolutely nothing had happened since 1932. The authors of the few really important books written in Germany since 1933 or published since 1945 were already famous twenty and twenty-five years ago. The younger generation seems to be petrified, inarticulate, incapable of consistent thought.

A young German art historian, guiding his audience among the masterpieces of the Berlin Museum, which had been sent on tour through several American cities, pointed to the Ancient Egyptian statue of Nefertiti as the sculpture "for which the whole world envies us," and then proceeded to say (a) that even the Americans had not "dared" to carry this "symbol of the Berlin collections" to the United States, and (b) that because of the "intervention of the Americans," the British did not "dare" to carry the Nefretete to the British Museum. The two contradictory attitudes to the Americans were separated by only a single sentence: the speaker, devoid of convictions, was merely groping automatically among the clichés with which his mind was furnished to find the one that might fit the occasion. The clichés have more often an old-fashioned nationalistic than an outspoken Nazi tone, but in any case one seeks in vain to discover behind them a consistent point of view, be it even a bad one.

With the downfall of Nazism, the Germans found themselves again exposed to facts and reality. But the experience of totalitarianism has robbed them of all spontaneous speech and comprehension, so that now, having no official line to guide them, they are, as it were, speechless, incapable of articulating thoughts and adequately expressing their feelings. The intellectual atmosphere is clouded with vague pointless generalities, with opinions formed long before the events they are supposed to fit actually happened; one is oppressed by a kind of pervasive public stupidity which cannot be trusted to judge correctly the most elementary events, and which, for example, makes it possible for a newspaper to complain, "The world at large once again deserted us"—a statement comparable for blind self-centeredness to the remark Ernst Juenger in his war diaries (*Strahlungen,* 1949) tells of having overheard in a conversation about Russian prisoners assigned to work near Hannover: "It seems there are scoundrels among them. They steal food from the dogs." As Juenger observes, "One often has the impression that the German middle classes are possessed by the devil."

THE rapidity with which, after the currency reform, everyday life in Germany returned to normal and reconstruction began in all fields, has become the talk of Europe. Without a doubt, people nowhere work so hard and long as in Germany. It is a well-known fact that Germans have for generations been overfond of working; and their present industriousness seems at first glance to give substance to the opinion that Germany is still potentially the most dangerous European nation. There are, moreover, many strong incentives for work. Unemployment is rampant and the position of the trade unions is so weak that compensation for overtime is not even demanded by the workers, who frequently refuse to report it to the unions; the housing situation is worse than the many new buildings would seem to indicate: business and office buildings for the great industrial and insurance companies have an unquestioned priority over dwelling units, and the result is that people prefer going to work on Saturdays and even Sundays to staying at home in overcrowded apartments. In rebuilding, as in almost all areas of German life, everything is done (often in a most spectacular way) to restore a facsimile of pre-war economic and industrial conditions, and very little is done for the welfare of the masses of the people.

Yet none of these facts can explain the atmosphere of feverish busyness on the one hand and the comparatively mediocre production on the other. Beneath the surface, the German attitude to work has undergone a deep change. The old virtue of seeking excellence in the finished product, no matter what the working conditions, has yielded to a mere blind need to keep busy, a greedy craving for something to do every moment of the day. Watching the Germans busily stumble through the ruins of a thousand years of their own history, shrugging their shoulders at the destroyed landmarks or resentful when reminded of the deeds of horror that haunt the whole surrounding world, one comes to realize that busyness has become their chief defense against reality. And one wants to cry out: But this is not real—real are the ruins, real are the past horrors, real are the dead whom you have forgotten. But they are living ghosts, whom speech and argument, the glance of human eyes and the mourning of human hearts, no longer touch.

THERE are, of course, many Germans whom this description does not fit. Above all, there is Berlin, whose people, in the midst of the most horrible physical destruction, have remained intact. I do not know why this should be so, but customs, manners, speech, approaches to people, are in the smallest details so absolutely different from everything one sees and has to face in the rest of Germany, that Berlin is almost like another country. There is hardly any resentment in Berlin against the victors and apparently never was; while the first saturation bombings from England were pulverizing the city, Berliners are reported to have crawled out of their cellars and, seeing one block after another gone, remarked: "Well, if the Tommies mean to keep this up, they'll soon have to bring their own houses with them." There is no embarrassment and no guilt-feeling, but frank and detailed recital of what happened to Berlin's Jews at the beginning of the war. Most important of all, in Berlin the people still actively hate Hitler, and even though they have more reason than other Germans to feel themselves pawns in international politics, they do not feel impotent but are con-

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vinced that their attitudes count for something; given half a chance, they will at least sell their lives dear.

The Berliners work just as hard as other people in Germany, but they are less busy, they will take time to show one around the ruins and will somewhat solemnly recite the names of the streets that are gone. It is hard to believe, but it seems there is something in the Berliners' claim that Hitler never entirely succeeded in conquering them. They are remarkably well-informed and have kept their sense of humor and their characteristically ironical friendliness. The only change in the people—apart from their having become somewhat sadder and less ready for laughter—is that "Red Berlin" is now violently anti-Communist. But here again there is an important difference between Berlin and the rest of Germany: only Berliners take the trouble to point out clearly the similarities between Hitler and Stalin, and only Berliners bother to tell you that they are of course not against the Russian people—a sentiment all the more remarkable if one remembers what happened to the Berliners, many of whom had welcomed the Red Army as the true liberator, during the first months of occupation, and what is still happening to them in the Eastern sector.

Berlin is an exception, but unfortunately not a very important one. For the city is hermetically sealed off and has little intercourse with the rest of the country, except that one meets people everywhere who because of the uncertainty there left Berlin for the Western zones and now complain bitterly of their loneliness and disgust. Indeed, there are quite a number of Germans who are "different"; but they use up their energy in efforts to penetrate the stifling atmosphere that surrounds them, and remain completely isolated. In a way these people are today worse off psychologically than in the worst years of Hitler's terror. In the last years of the war, there did exist a vague comradeship of opposition among all who for one reason or another were against the regime. Together they hoped for the day of defeat, and since—apart from the few well-known exceptions—they had no real intention of doing anything to hasten that day, they could enjoy the charm of a half-imaginary rebellion. The very danger involved in even the mere thought of opposition created a sentiment of solidarity all the more consoling because it could express itself only in such intangible gestures of emotion as a glance or a handclasp, which assumed a significance out of all proportion. The emergence from this overheated intimacy of danger into the crude egotism and spreading shallowness of postwar life has been a truly heartbreaking experience for many people. (It may be remarked that today in the Eastern zone, with its police regime, this time almost universally detested by the population, an even stronger atmosphere of comradeship, intimacy, and half-spoken sign language prevails than under the Nazis, so that it is often precisely the best elements in the Eastern zone who find it difficult to make up their minds to move to the West.)

II

PERHAPS the saddest part of a sad story is the failure of the three devices used by the Western Allies to solve the moral, economic, and political problem of Germany. Denazification, revival of free enterprise, and federalization are certainly not the cause of present conditions in Germany, but they have helped to conceal and thus to perpetuate moral confusion, economic chaos, social injustice, and political impotence.

Denazification rested on the assumption that there were objective criteria not only for clear-cut distinction between Nazis and non-Nazis, but for the whole Nazi hierarchy ranging from little sympathizer to war criminal. From the beginning, the whole system, based upon length of party membership, ranks and offices held, date of first entrance, etc., was very complicated, and involved almost everyone. The very few who had been able to keep alive outside the stream of life in Hitler Germany were exempt, and of course rightly so; but they were joined by a number of very different characters who had been lucky or cautious or influential enough to avoid the many annoyances of party membership: men who had actually been prominent in Nazi Germany but now were not required to go through the denazification process. Some of these gentlemen, mostly of the upper middle classes, have by now established open contact with their less fortunate colleagues, jailed for some war crime. This they do partly to seek advice in economic and industrial matters, but also because they have at last become bored with hypocrisy. The injustices of the denazification system were simple and monotonous: the city-employed garbage collector, who under Hitler had to become a party member or look for another job, was caught in the denazification net, while his superiors either went scot-free because they knew how to manage these matters, or else suffered the same penalty as he: to them, of course, a much less serious matter.

Worse than these daily injustices was the fact that the system, devised to draw clear moral and political distinctions in the chaos of a completely disorganized people, actually tended to blur even the few genuine distinctions that had survived the Nazi regime. Active opponents to the regime naturally had to enter a Nazi organization in order to camouflage their illegal activities, and these members of such resistance movement as had existed in Germany were caught in the same net as their enemies, to the great pleasure of the latter. In theory, it was possible to present proofs of anti-Nazi activity; but not only was it difficult to convince occupation officers without the slightest experience of the intricacies of a terror regime; there was also the danger that the applicant might compromise himself in the eyes of the authorities, who were, after all, primarily interested in peace and order, by showing too convincingly that he had been capable of independent thought and rebellious action.

It is doubtful, however, that the denazification program has stifled new political formations in Germany that might conceivably have grown out of the resistance to Nazism, since the resistance movement itself had so very little vitality in the first place. But there is no doubt that denazification has created an unwholesome new community of interest among the more-or-less compromised, those who for opportunistic reasons had become more-or-less convinced Nazis. This powerful group of slightly dubious characters excludes both those who kept their integrity and those who participated in any resounding way in the Nazi movement. It would be inaccurate in either case to think of exclusion as based on specific political convictions: the elimination of confirmed anti-Nazis does not prove the others to be confirmed Nazis, and the elimination of "famous" Nazis does not mean that the others hate Nazism. It is simply that the denazification program has been a direct threat to livelihood and existence, and the majority have tried to relieve the pressure by a system of mutual assurance that the whole thing need not be taken too seriously. Such assurance can be gained only from those who are as much and as little compromised as oneself. Those who became Nazis out of conviction as well as those who kept their integrity are felt to constitute an alien and threatening element, partly because they cannot be frightened by their past, but also because their very existence is living testimony that something really serious happened, that some decisive act was committed. Thus it has come about that not only the active Nazis but the convinced anti-Nazis are excluded from positions of power and influence in Germany today; this is the most significant symptom of the German intelligentsia's unwillingness to take its own past seriously or to shoulder the burden of responsibility bequeathed to it by the Hitler regime.

The community of interest that exists among the more-or-less compromised is further strengthened by the general German—but not only German!—attitude to official questionnaires. In contrast to Anglo-Saxon and American habits, Europeans do not always believe in telling the absolute truth when an official body asks embarrassing questions. In countries whose legal system does not allow one to give testimony in one's own cause, lying is considered no great sin if the truth happens to prejudice one's chances. Thus for many Germans there is a discrepancy between their answers to military government questionnaires and the truth as known to their neighbors; and so the bonds of duplicity are strengthened.

Yet it was not even conscious dishonesty that defeated the denazification program. A great number of Germans, especially among the more educated, apparently are no longer capable of telling the truth even if they want to. All those who became Nazis after 1933 yielded to some kind of pressure, which ranged from the crude threat to life and livelihood, to various considerations of career, to reflections about the "irresistible stream of history." In the cases of physical or economic pressure, there should have been the possibility of mental reservation, of acquiring with cynicism that absolutely necessary membership card. But, curiously, it seems that very few Germans were capable of such healthy cynicism; what bothered them was not the membership card but the mental reservation, so that they often ended by adding to their enforced enrollment the necessary convictions, in order to shed the burden of duplicity. Today, they have a certain inclination to remember only the initial pressure, which was real enough; from their belated inner adjustment to Nazi doctrines, dictated by conscience, they have drawn the half-conscious conclusion that it was their conscience itself that betrayed them—an experience that does not exactly promote moral improvement.

Certainly the impact of an everyday life wholly permeated by Nazi doctrines and practices was not easy to resist. The position of an anti-Nazi resembled that of a normal person who happens to be thrown into an insane asylum where all the inmates have exactly the same delusion: it becomes difficult under such circumstances to trust one's own senses. And there was the continual added strain of behaving according to the rules of the insane environment, which after all was the only tangible reality, in which a man could never afford to lose his sense of direction. This demanded an ever-present awareness of one's whole existence, an attention that could never relax into the automatic reactions we all use to cope with the many daily situations. The absence of such automatic reactions is the chief element in the anxiety of maladjustment; and although, objectively speaking, maladjustment in Nazi society signified mental normality, the strain of maladjustment on the individual was just as great as in a normal society.

The deep moral confusion in Germany today, which has grown out of this Nazi-fabricated confusion of truth with reality, is more than amorality and has deeper causes than mere wickedness. The so-called "good Germans" are often as misled in their moral judgments of themselves and others as those who simply refuse to recognize that anything wrong or out of the ordinary was done by Germany at all. Quite a number of Germans who are even somewhat over-emphatic about German guilt in general and their own guilt in particular become curiously confused if they are forced to articulate their opinions; they may make a mountain out of some irrelevant molehill, while some real enormity escapes their notice altogether. One variation of this confusion is that Germans who confess their own guilt are in many cases altogether innocent in the ordinary, down-to-earth sense, whereas those who are guilty of something real have the calmest consciences in the world. The recently published post-war diary of Knut Hamsun, which has found a large and enthusiastic audience in Germany, gives testimony on the highest level to this horrible innocence that transforms itself into a persecution complex when confronted with the judgment of a morally intact world.

Ernst Juenger's war diaries offer perhaps the best and most honest evidence of the tremendous difficulties the individual encounters in keeping himself and his standards of truth and morality intact in a world where truth and morality have lost all visible expression. Despite the undeniable influence of Juenger's earlier writings on certain members of the Nazi intelligentsia, he was an active anti-Nazi from the first to the last day of the regime, proving that the somewhat old-fashioned notion of honor, once current in the Prussian officer corps, was quite sufficient for individual resistance. Yet even this unquestionable integrity has a hollow ring; it is as though morality had ceased to work and had become an empty shell into which the person who has to live, function, and survive all day long, retires for the night and solitude only. Day and night become nightmares of each other. The moral judgment, reserved for the night, is a nightmare of fear of being discovered by day; and the life of the day is a nightmare of horror in the betrayal of the intact conscience that functions only by night.

IN VIEW of the very complicated moral situation of the country at the close of the war, it is not surprising that the gravest single error in the American denazification policy occurred in its initial effort to arouse the conscience of the German people to the enormity of the crimes committed in their name and under conditions of organized complicity. In the early days of occupation, posters appeared everywhere showing the photographed horrors of Buchenwald with a finger pointing at the spectator, and the text: "You are guilty." For a majority of the population these pictures were the first authentic knowledge of what had been done in their name. How could they feel guilty if they had not even known? All they saw was the pointed finger, clearly indicating the wrong person. From this error they concluded that the whole poster was a propaganda lie.

Thus, at least, runs the story one hears time and again in Germany. The story is true enough so far as it goes; yet it does not explain the very violent reaction to these posters, which even today has not died down, and it does not explain the affronting neglect of the content of the photographs. Both the violence and the neglect are called forth by the hidden truth of the poster rather than by its obvious error. For while the German people were not informed of all Nazi crimes and were even deliberately kept ignorant of their exact nature, the Nazis had seen to it that every German knew some horrible story to be true, and he did not need a detailed knowledge of all the horrors committed in his name to realize that he had been made accomplice to unspeakable crimes.

This is a sad story which is not made less sad by the realization that, under the circumstances, the Allied powers had very little choice. The only conceivable alternative to the denazification program would have been a revolution—the outbreak of the German people's spontaneous wrath against all those they knew to be prominent members of the Nazi regime. Uncontrolled and bloody as such an uprising might have been, it certainly would have followed better standards of justice than a paper procedure. But the revolution did not come to pass, and not primarily because it was difficult to organize under the eyes of four foreign armies. It is only too likely that not a single soldier, German or foreign, would have been needed to shield the real culprits from the wrath of the people. This wrath does not exist today, and apparently it has never existed.

NOT only was the denazification program inadequate to the moral and political situation at the end of the war; it quickly came into conflict with American plans for the reconstruction and re-education of Germany. To rebuild the German economy along lines of free enterprise seemed a plausible enough anti-Nazi measure, since the Nazi economy had been a clearly planned economy, although it had not—or perhaps not yet—touched property conditions in the country. But the factory owners as a class had been good Nazis, or at least strong supporters of a regime that had offered, in exchange for some relinquishment of private control, to bring the whole European trade and industrial system into German hands. In this, German businessmen behaved no differently from businessmen in other countries in the imperialist era: the imperialist-minded businessman is no believer in free enterprise—on the contrary, he sees state intervention as the only guarantee of safe returns from his far-flung enterprises. It is true enough that the German businessmen, unlike the old-style imperialists, did not control the state but were used by the party for party interests. But this difference, decisive as it might have become in the long run, had not yet appeared in its full force.

In exchange for state-guaranteed expansion, the German business class had been ready enough to liquidate some of its more conspicuous positions of power, especially over the working class. A controlled economic system, with greater safeguards for workers' interests, had therefore come to be the strongest single attraction of the Nazi regime for both working class and upper middle class. Here again, the development did not run its course, and state-owned, or rather party-owned, slavery as we know it in Russia had not yet become a threat to German workers (though of course it had been the chief threat to the working classes of all other European countries during the war). The result has been that planned economy in Germany, with no Communist connotations, is remembered as the only safeguard against unemployment and over-exploitation.

The reintroduction of truly free enterprise meant handing over the factories and the control of economic life to those who, even if a little wrong about the ultimate consequences of Nazism, had been staunch supporters of the regime for all practical purposes. If they had not had much real power under the Nazis, they had enjoyed all the pleasures of status, and this regardless of actual membership in the party. And since the end of the war, together with almost unlimited power over economic life, they have regained their old power over the working class — that is, the only class in Germany which, though it had welcomed state intervention as insurance against unemployment, had never been wholeheartedly Nazi. In other words, at the time when denazification was the official watchword of Allied policy in Germany, power was returned to people whose Nazi sympathies were a matter of record, and power was taken away from those whose untrustworthiness with regard to the Nazis had been the only somewhat established fact in an otherwise fluctuating situation.

To make things worse, the power returned to the industrialists was freed even of the feeble controls that had existed under the Weimar Republic. The trade unions which the Nazis had wiped out were not reinstated to their former position—partly because they lacked competent personnel and partly because they were suspected of anti-capitalist convictions—and the efforts of the unions to regain their former influence over the workers failed badly, with the result that by now they have lost the little confidence they may have inherited from memories of former times.

The socialists' stubborn attack on the Schuman plan may look foolish to the outside world. This attack, however, can be properly understood (though hardly excused) only if one bears in mind that, under present circumstances, the combination of the Rhine-Ruhr industry with French industry might very well mean an even more concerted and better supported assault on the workers' standard of living. The mere fact that the Bonn government, frequently considered a mere façade for the interests of the industrialists, has supported the plan so heartily, seems reason enough for suspicion. For, unfortunately, the German upper middle classes have neither learned nor forgotten from the past; they still believe, despite a wealth of experience to the contrary, that a large "labor reserve"—that is, considerable unemployment—is a healthy economic sign, and they are satisfied if they can keep wages down in this way.

THE economic issue is considerably sharpened by the problem of the refugees, which is the greatest economic and social problem of present-day Germany. So long as these people are not resettled, they will constitute a grave political danger, precisely because they have been driven into a political vacuum. In common with the comparatively few convinced Nazis who are still left in Germany and who almost without exception were former members of the SS, the expellees have a clear-cut political program and can rely upon a certain group solidarity, two elements conspicuously absent in all other strata of the population. Their program is the reestablishment of a powerful Germany which would make it possible for them to return to their former homes in the East and take their revenge on the populations that expelled them. In the meantime, they are busy hating and despising the native German population, which received them with something less than fraternal sentiments.

As distinguished from the problem posed by the remnants of the Nazi movement, the refugee problem could be solved by energetic and intelligent economic measures. That, failing such measures, the refugees have been driven into a position where they had virtually no choice but to establish a party of their own if they wanted their interests to be represented at all, is in no small part the fault of the present regime, and more specifically of the influence of the free-enterprise slogan as it has been understood or misunderstood by Germans. Public funds are used for credit to big enterprises; encouragement of small enterprises (many of the refugees are skilled workers and craftsmen), especially in the form of cooperatives, has been almost completely neglected. The amount of money spent for the benefit of the refugees varies from one Land to the other, but the amounts are nearly always hopelessly inadequate, not only in terms of absolute help but also in proportion to the general state budget. Recent proposals by the Bonn government to reduce business taxes—a clear index to the government's economic policy—would have decreased the available funds for refugees even more sharply. The fact that the occupation authorities vetoed this measure may offer some hope that the American authorities are coming to understand that the free-enterprise slogan has different connotations in Germany, and in Europe in general, from those that surround it in the United States.

IT IS indeed one of the chief handicaps of American policy in Europe that this difference is not clearly understood. The American system, where the power of industrial management is strongly counterbalanced by the power of organized labor, would hardly seem acceptable to the European believer in free enterprise; in Europe, the trade unions even in their best days were never among the established powers, but always led the uncertain existence of a mildly rebellious force operating with varying success in an everlasting battle against the employers. In America, moreover, there is a certain reluctance, shared by employers and workers, to resort to state intervention; sometimes the mere threat of state arbitration may bring the disputing parties back to bilateral negotiations. In Germany, both workers and employers have only one idea in their heads: that the state must throw its full weight on the side of their interests. With the possible exception of the Scandinavians, no European citizenry has the political maturity of Americans, for whom a certain amount of responsibility, i.e., of moderation in the pursuit of self-interest, is almost a matter of course. Furthermore, this is still a country of abundance and of opportunity, so that the talk of free initiative has not yet become meaningless; and the very dimensions of the American economy tend to defeat over-all planning. But in European countries, where national territories have continually shrunk in proportion to industrial capacity, most people are firmly convinced that even the present standard of living can be guaranteed only if there is some measure of planning to assure everyone a just share in the national income.

Behind the loose and wholly unjustified talk of American "imperialism" in Europe, looms the not so unjustified fear that the introduction of the American economic system into Europe, or rather American support of the economic *status quo,* can only result in a miserably low standard of living for the masses. The social and political stability of the Scandinavian countries results partly from strong trade unions, partly from the role of cooperatives in economic life, and partly from a wisely exerted state intervention. These factors indicate at least the general direction that the solution of European economic and social problems might take if unsolved political problems did not interfere and if the general world situation allowed enough time. In Germany, at any rate, the system of free enterprise has led quickly to cut-throat practices, monopolization, and trustification, regardless of all efforts of the American authorities to prevent these developments.

POLITICALLY, the most serious aspect of the situation is not, as might be expected, the rising dissatisfaction of the working classes. The tragic history of the German socialist parties seems to have exhausted their vitality; never before has the German working class been in a less revolutionary mood. There is a certain embittered resignation to a system that is "sold" to them under the trade name of democracy, but this resentment will hardly cause any trouble; on the contrary, it is almost a guarantee that any regime, however good or bad, will be acceptable, as a matter of indifference. An altogether different and really dangerous side of the matter is that since the situation of the workers has become more hopeless, more insecure, and more miserable than before, the old fear of "proletarianization" has received new and powerful motivation.

This fear especially grips the middle classes, who once again lost their money through the currency reform, in contrast to the industrialists whose fortunes were secure in real properties. The financial status of the middle-class Germans, especially if they lost their belongings in the bombings or are refugees, differs in no way from that of the ordinary worker's family. But the idea of having to share the worker's lot for a lifetime is forbidding indeed.

To avoid this, the younger people therefore try desperately to scrape together a few marks to enter one of the many universities—all of them overcrowded. It is their only chance to keep their middle-class status and to escape the misery of a proletarianized life. Everywhere in Germany one is told that in a few years there will be enough lawyers, physicians, teachers, art historians, philosophers, and theologians to form a breadline stretching over all the highways. And most of these potentially unemployed academicians will have earned their degrees at the price of appalling sacrifices; many students live on a monthly income of sixty or seventy marks, which means chronic undernourishment and complete abstention from even the most modest pleasures, such as a glass of wine or an evening at the movies. Academic requiremeans in general are not much lower than they used to be, so that the fanatic devotion of these young people to their studies, prompted as it may be by quite non-intellectual motives, is interrupted only by recurring spells of hard manual labor to earn a little extra money.

Nobody in Germany seems to doubt that the tremendous sacrifices of the student generation can only end in severe disappointment, and nobody seems to give this problem much serious thought. The only solution would be the closing of a number of German universities, combined with a pitiless screening of the high school graduates, perhaps even the introduction of the otherwise questionable French system of competitive examinations in which the number of successful candidates is determined beforehand by the number of available places. Instead of a discussion along these or other lines, the Bavarian government only recently opened one more (the fourth) university in Bavaria, and the French occupation authorities, in some ill-advised urge to improve German culture, have actually opened a brand new university in Mainz—which means that six thousand students have come to aggravate the already quite hopeless housing situation in a city almost completely destroyed. And indeed a rather desperate courage would be required under present conditions to take measures that would forcibly empty the universities; it would be like depriving a despairing man of his last chance, even though this chance had become a gambler's chance. What course political development will take in Germany when a whole class of frustrated and starving intellectuals is let loose on an indifferent and sullen population, is anybody's guess.

Even those observers of Allied policy in Germany who viewed denazification with misgivings and saw that a system of free enterprise could lead only to the aggrandizement of politically undesirable elements, placed considerable hope on the federalization program, under which Germany was divided into Laender (states) with extensive powers of local self-government. It seemed indisputably right in so many ways: it would act as a safeguard against accumulation of power, and thus appease the understandable if exaggerated fears of Germany's neighbors; it would prepare the German people for the hoped-for federalization of Europe; it would teach grass-roots democracy in the field of communal or local affairs where people had their immediate interests and were supposed to know the ropes, and thus might counteract the Nazi megalomania which had taught Germans to think in continents and plan in centuries.

But the failure of the Laender governments is already almost a matter of record. It is a failure in the only political field where the Germans have been left alone almost from the beginning of the occupation, and where success or failure was independent of Germany's status on the international scene. To some extent, of course, the failure of the local governments can be blamed upon the general climate of German life created by denazification and the social consequences of a ruthless economic policy; but this explanation sounds valid only if one wilfully ignores the great degree of freedom that was granted to the Germans in the Laender governments. The truth is that centralization, as it was accomplished by nation-states and as it was established in Germany, not by Hitler but by Bismarck, succeeded in destroying all authentic desire for local autonomy and in undermining the political vitality of all provincial or municipal bodies. Whatever is left of such traditions has assumed a hopelessly reactionary character and has petrified into the cheapest kind of folklore. Local government in most instances has liberated the most vicious local conflicts, creating chaos everywhere because there is no power great enough to overawe conflicting factions. The element of public responsibility and even of national interest being conspicuously absent, local politics tends to deteriorate quickly into the lowest possible form of plain corruption. The dubious political past of everybody who is experienced (and the "inexperienced" elements have by now been rather ruthlessly eliminated), and the low salaries paid to the civil servants, together open the door to all kinds of mismanagement: many public officials can easily be blackmailed, and many more find it very difficult to resist the temptation to augment their salaries by accepting bribes.

The Bonn government has little direct connection with the Laender governments: it is neither controlled by them nor does it exercise any noticeable control over them. The only functioning links between Bonn and the Laender governments are the party machines, which rule supreme in all questions of personnel and administration, and which, in sharp contrast to the "small state" structure of the country, are more centralized than ever and therefore represent the only visible power.

This is a dangerous situation, but in itself it is not necessarily the worst that could have happened. The real trouble comes from the nature of the party machines themselves. The present parties are continuations of the pre-Hitler parties—that is, of the parties that Hitler found it so surprisingly easy to destroy. They are in many cases run by the same people and are dominated by the old ideologies and the old tactics. However, only the tactics have somehow preserved their vitality; the ideologies are carried along simply for tradition's sake and because a German party cannot very well exist without a *Weltanschauung*. One cannot even say that the ideologies have survived for want of something better; it is rather as though the Germans, after their experience with Nazi ideology, have become convinced that just about anything will do. The party machines are primarily interested in providing jobs and favors for their members, and they are all-powerful to do so. This means that they tend to attract the most opportunistic elements of the population. Far from encouraging initiative of any kind, they are afraid of young people with new ideas. In short, they have been reborn in senility. Consequently, what little there is of political interest and discussion occurs in small circles outside the parties and outside the public institutions. Each of these small groups, because of the political vacuum and the general corruption of public life around them, is the potential nucleus for a new movement; for the parties have not only failed to enlist the support of the German intelligentsia, they have also convinced the masses that they do not represent their interests.

THE melancholy story of postwar Germany is not one of missed opportunities. In our eagerness to find a definite culprit and definable mistakes we tend to overlook the more fundamental lessons this story may teach us. When all is said, the twofold question remains: What could one reasonably expect from a people after twelve years of totalitarian rule? What could one reasonably expect from an occupation confronted with the impossible task of putting back on its feet a people that had lost the ground from under it?

But it would be well to remember and try to understand the experience of the occupation of Germany, for we are all too likely to see it repeated in our lifetime on a gigantic scale. Unfortunately, the liberation of a people from totalitarianism is not likely to come to pass merely through "the breakdown of communications and centralized control [which] might well enable the brave Russian peoples to free themselves from a tyranny far worse than that of the Czars," as Churchill put it in his recent speech to the Assembly of the Council of Europe. The German example shows that help from the outside is not likely to set free indigenous forces of self-help, and that totalitarian rule is something more than merely the worst kind of tyranny. Totalitarianism kills the roots.

Politically speaking, the present conditions of German life have a greater significance as an object lesson for the consequences of totalitarianism than as a demonstration of the so-called German problem in itself. This problem, like all other European problems, could be solved only in a federated Europe; but even such a solution seems of little relevance in view of the imminent political crisis of these coming years. Neither a regenerated nor an unregenerated Germany is likely to play a great role in it. And this knowledge of the ultimate futility of any political initiative on their part in the present struggle is not the least potent factor in the Germans' reluctance to face the reality of their destroyed country.

THE BATTLE THAT SAVED TEL AVIV

Turning Point in Israel's War of Independence

URIE AVNERY

"HALLO—Hager—Boaz—Shamir—one-five: Hallo—Hager—Boaz—Shamir--one-five . . ." a monotonous voice kept droning through the wireless. The girl operator at the Givati Brigade's headquarters recorded the cable mechanically. "Urgent message—the lookout notifies. . . ." A young orderly took it to the CO's room. One message out of many.

In the brigade commander's room, at a table covered with maps, sat a light-haired man with blue-gray eyes and a nose like an eagle's beak. He looked very tired as he read the message: "The lookout at Nizanim reports: two hundred Egyptian motor vehicles have passed in a northerly direction. . . ."

The messages came in one by one. The Nizanim lookout reported again: Four hundred vehicles have passed. Six hundred. Eight hundred. A thousand. Twelve hundred. Fifteen hundred Egyptian motorized vehicles have passed along the road in a northerly direction. The lookout from Gan Yavneh reported: Three hundred motor vehicles observed on the road proceeding northwards from Isdud. Five hundred. Eight hundred. Tanks. Bren carriers. Heavy armored cars. . . . The commander closed his eyes, burying his face in his hands. He needed no map. He knew that the distance from Isdud to Tel Aviv was only twenty miles as the crow flies. The door opened. A short, plump man came in: the brigade chief of operations.

"I've seen them. More than a thousand motors north of Isdud." He spoke nonchalantly. That morning he had been at the front to check up on the lookouts' reports with his own eyes. A tremendous Egyptian force was advancing on Tel Aviv.

For a moment the two men looked at one another. They were very different, almost opposite types. Shimon Avidan, the brigade commander, was sensitive, nervous, reticent, a born fighter, with a turbulent past, head of an anti-Nazi underground unit, then commando leader and Palmach man. His chief of operations, Meirke Davidson, was a kibbutz member, sociable, cool-headed, powerful and energetic.

What lay between the Egyptians and Tel Aviv? Almost nothing. Two companies armed with rifles, light machine guns, and Molotov cocktails. What else? A bridge north of Isdud that they had blown up the night before last. What else? Four fighter planes that had just arrived from abroad and were still unfit for use under the conditions of the country; they had not yet made their test flights.

FOUR airmen stood on the flying field gazing at the fighter planes, which mechanics had just finished assembling. Their engines still had to be tested. Suddenly an infantry commander appeared. They did not know his face, but his name was familiar.

"Boys," he said, "you have to get up in the air."

The four stared at him in astonishment. He was not their commanding officer, and a plane that had not been properly tested was unfit for action.

THIS account of one of the most important of all episodes in Israel's War of Independence, pieced together months after the battle, was written by a man who was himself an immediate participant, fought through the Palestine war as a corporal in the famous "Samson's Foxes" jeep commandos of the Givati Brigade, and was seriously wounded in the abdomen and arm by machine-gun bullets. The book he wrote afterwards, *Bisdot Pileshet 1948* ("In the Fields of Philistia, 1948"), has gone into five editions since it was published in Israel in June 1949. The material we publish here is excerpted from that book. Mr. Avnery was born in Germany in 1923.

"Your planes are all that can save Tel Aviv and the State of Israel. The enemy is advancing on the city. Except for you there's nothing left to hold them up."

The infantry commander's eyes were even more eloquent than his words. The flyers got into their planes, waved, and took off. Three came back.

THE Egyptian columns had been stalled north of Isdud by a blown bridge. Their officers were cursing at the delay. All of a sudden airplanes appeared, and the troops scattered. Bombs fell and though they scored some hits, there was little damage.

Where did the Jews get airplanes? This was a new factor that had not been taken into account. The Egyptian was a cautious fellow. He had been trained in a British military academy that taught him to think along orthodox lines. Precious armor must not be risked. Therefore they had to wait, gather greater force, and bring up anti-aircraft artillery. They had to do this quietly, make fresh plans, then deliver the major blow that would crush and destroy the Zionists. Orders were given: halt, dig in, and prepare for defense.

BRIGADE headquarters near Rehovot worked feverishly. The Egyptians had to be harried without let-up, given no chance to collect themselves. The commander and his chief of operations pored over maps, battalion commanders came and went, the wireless and telephone functioned without interruption.

That night saw an attack mounted, and the next night and the next. They were slight, mere diversionary actions—an inch here and a dab there. But the enemy became nervous. He wasted vast quantities of ammunition. The sky over his positions was lit up constantly with red and green Very lights. All his weapons went into action at the faintest rustle in the fields. He got little rest.

IT WAS June 4, 1948. From every part of the wide South fighting units came up to mass at Gan Yavneh and Bitzaron over against the Egyptian concentration. Tonight they were due to strike a heavy blow at Isdud. It was a daring gamble, for large areas had been left without adequate defense in order to permit this concentration. The Egyptians could bring three to five heavy machine guns into action against every Bren gun of the Israelis. And the Israeli commander was also aware that his communications system was not yet adequate to an operation involving as many as five battalions. Once they were engaged there would be no communication between the separate units.

Yet there was no alternative. It goes against all the laws of strategy, and still it is correct, that if you lack the strength to withstand the enemy's attack, then attack him, hit him, shake him up, mislead him, give him no opportunity to group his forces and prepare an attack. This is an expensive tactic. Yet it was the only one that could save the South and Tel Aviv.

The first news came in bit by bit. The operation had failed. The attack had been repelled at every point, with numerous, very numerous losses. Yet one thing was clear: the enemy had been impressed. He would not move easily.

NOW an intellectual and moral wrestling match began between the Israeli and Egyptian commanders, with the arena the coastal plain, the Biblical land of Philistia. At headquarters near Rehovot blue-gray eyes, calculating and planning, concentrated on the map. In one of the houses in Mejdal a similar map was being studied by the brown eyes of the Egyptian commander.

The problem for the Israeli was how to prevent the Egyptian from breaking through to the north, towards Tel Aviv, when there was no force capable of holding off his armor, planes, and artillery. The only answer was to try to shake his psychological equilibrium. His lines of communications and supplies had to be threatened.

About three kilometers south of Isdud, between Beer Tuvia and Nizanim, there was a height marked by the number 69 on the map. It was low, bald, and surmounted by three water towers constructed by the English during the big war. This hill dominated the highroad between the Egyptian concentration at Isdud and the base at Mejdal. On the 7th of June, two days after the battle of Isdud, a small Jewish force proceeded to Hill 69 by night and dug itself in.

The Egyptian felt the menace and prepared to hit back. Two days later, at dawn, he flung his concentrated might against the hill. For the first time a Jewish strongpoint was subjected to the simultaneous attack of all the forms of modern armament—artillery bombardment, bombing from the air, the weight of heavy motorized armor. The Jews stood up bravely but at the crucial moment the weakest link in their chain broke; the spirit of one man in a responsible position failed him. The defense collapsed, and Hill 69 fell into the hands of the enemy. The Egyptian had won the second round.

At brigade headquarters the report came like a bolt from the blue. For a moment there was a state of general stupefaction. Everybody had been sure that the hill would hold out. By all military calculation it had to hold out—and still it had fallen.

They all saw just one fact. In the first contest between Jewish men and Egyptian steel, the steel had won the victory. Was the spirit really unable to stand up to the material? Were they wrong, all those who had hoped that the fighting man would beat the fighting machine?

Meanwhile, if the Egyptians continued to advance towards Beer Tuvia, they would break the front. And there were no reserves to stop them. So if they were not stopped before Beer Tuvia, the South would fall and Tel Aviv with it.

The whole area held by the brigade had been virtually denuded of troops. The Arab Legion, aided by local irregulars, had taken Gezer to the east. The kibbutzim of Gath and Galon were holding out by a sheer miracle, with the help of hardly a single regular soldier. All forces were concentrated against the Egyptians in the Isdud-Hill 69 sector—and there were no reserves.

Count Bernadotte, the mediator appointed by the UN, had issued a cease-fire order to take effect the next day. But would the Egyptians honor it if they realized that a single additional blow would suffice to settle the fate of Israel?

Little by little the dreadful day passed, each second an eternity. The commander himself went to Beer Tuvia. The third and decisive round was beginning.

There were two Jewish companies at Beit Daras, between Beer Tuvia and Hill 69. One of them was moving toward the hill to cover the retreat of its defenders. It reached the edge of an orange grove about two hundred meters from the height and dug in. There were one Piat, three Bren guns, and eighty Jews to defend the land of Israel. Meanwhile, the Egyptians occupied the hill, and their advance force of tanks moved ahead towards Beit Daras. All of a sudden they were met by unexpected fire from an orange grove. Three Piat shells hit a tank, but failed to explode. Bren-gun bullets scratched the armor. The tanks halted, and wirelessed headquarters; the Egyptian commander there thought for a few moments, then ordered them to return to Hill 69 and dig in there.

The Jewish commander immediately exploited this miracle by striking a second blow just as the Egyptians began to show signs of renewed movement. A small force of jeeps and half-tracks of the Palmach commandos in the Negev moved toward the hill, fired a few rounds and withdrew. The Egyptians halted again. The Jews had won the third round. Then Bernadotte's cease-fire came into effect.

The truce was not a restful period. Both sides feverishly prepared for the decisive second stage, both studied the lessons of the first battle, drew their conclusions, and corrected their errors. The Egyptians further increased their forces and, in despair of breaking through in the Isdud sector, shifted their main force southward. There they made ready for the decisive, all-out attack.

The Jewish commander reviewed his forces, knowing that the next struggle would be an even harder one and that he would still have to fight without reserves, and still have at his disposal only those same five infantry battalions supplemented by a few obsolete cannons. He would have no fighter planes and no tanks. Benefiting by his experience of the Isdud battle, he set up a combat headquarters that was to travel with the forward troops and direct their movements on the battlefield, coordinating their action and keeping it under control at every stage. The units received further training, and positions were fortified.

THE first blow came from an unexpected quarter. News arrived that some of the settlers in the South were preparing to flee their villages. Down in the plain there were no illusions. The inhabitants of Gan Yavneh, Beer Tuvia, and Negba knew the real state of affairs. They knew that tanks had defeated men in the battle for Hill 69. They knew that the force left to hold their homes was exceedingly small, and without reserves, and would have to hold out on its own. Moreover, they were tired. Ever since the Egyptian invasion they had been toiling incessantly at fortifications and at the same time trying their best to keep their farms running. Not only had the army not fed them, it had even requisitioned part of their food. At Gan Yavneh almost all the houses had been hit by Egyptian batteries firing from only a mile and a quarter away. And now they were faced with the prospect of being directly attacked in full force.

The local village commanders requested the brigade commander to come down and persuade the settlers to stay. He believed that his army would be unable to hold out anywhere without close contact with the population. And he knew that the civilians had to remain in their homes of their own free will, not under duress.

The commander went from place to place, talking everywhere. He made no promises, pledged no reinforcements, no supply of non-existent heavy weapons. He promised only one thing—that his men and officers would hold out to the last. The settlers listened to him, and resolved to stay put, together with the soldiers.

ON JULY 8, with the dawn, thirty hours before the end of the truce, the Egyptians attacked Beit Daras. A picked company of Sudanese broke into the Israeli positions, were met in hand-to-hand combat—and stopped. There were dozens of casualties on both sides. The enemy drew off.

The commander and his second-in-command were at the new combat headquarters near Kfar Warburg. There they decided to counterattack at once, on the same day, to forestall the Egyptian and knock him off balance. That night, the same 8th of July, part of the brigade force feinted attacks at Height 113, Khartieh, and Hata, while the rest assaulted and took the villages of Iraq Sueidan, Beit Afa, and Ibdis in the Negba expanse.

A Palmach unit went into action against the police station outside Iraq Sueidan, a terrifying fortress that dominated the whole south. But the attack failed, and early in the morning the Israelis had to withdraw from Iraq Sueidan itself and from Beit Afa too, neither of which could be held as long as the police station remained in the hands of the enemy. But the Ibdis strongpoint near Negba stayed in the brigade's possession.

Now it was the enemy's turn. He moved out of the Iraq Sueidan police station in tremendous force and launched himself against Negba and Ibdis. At the latter place the troops had not had enough time to reorganize and dig in properly, since its capture had been completed only at eleven that morning, when the Egyptians' final preparations for their counterattack were already to be observed in the distance.

The original intentions of the Egyptians had been quite clear, even without the benefit of a battle order of theirs that had fallen into the hands of the Jews when they took Ibdis. This order had envisaged a pincers movement, with an Egyptian column piercing the front near Beit Daras and then uniting in the plain with a second Egyptian column that was to push its way through the Negba-Ibdis sector. The success of this double movement would have caused the Jewish front to collapse entirely and leave the whole coastal plain open as far as Tel Aviv. The repulse of the Egyptians at Beit Daras and, coming on the night of the same day, the Jewish attack in the Negba area, had ruined the whole plan. But, relying on their tremendous superiority in weapons and reserves, the Egyptians were ready to come back to the attack again and again. And they did.

The battle for Ibdis and Negba raged four days and nights. It has no parallel in the entire history of the Palestinian war. And it determined the fate of Tel Aviv. On the second day the entire Jewish front was subjected to a terrible shelling, followed by an all-out assault on Ibdis. The Egyptians attacked eight times that day. First artillery, mortars, and fighter planes went into action; then came tanks followed by line upon line of infantry. They were beaten back each time.

From noon on a stream of wounded descended constantly from the strongpoint, the company commander among them. Another commander was dispatched to replace him, but the wireless from Ibdis reported that the soldiers and platoon commanders felt they would be able to manage without him.

By evening all that was left of the company defending Ibdis was less than a single platoon. Another unit was sent to relieve it and risk the same fate. But headquarters was worried. There were no reserves to cover such losses.

During the night settlers turned up at Ibdis, in the midst of the ceaseless bombardment, to dig foxholes for the troops. Both civilians and soldiers were dead tired, and both knew that they would have to fight next day and the day after, and the day after that as well.

THE battle went on, and Negba and Ibdis held out. On the fourth day the weary Egyptians made one last all-out attack. One road led to Negba, and the entire front depended upon it. From a distance the Iraq Sueidan police fortress dominated a part of this road, where it passed under a tiny hillock that bore the number 105 on the map. On the fourth day the Egyptians took Hill 105 and dug in. Negba was cut off.

It was the Hill 69 business all over again, but with the roles reversed. The brigade commander realized that he had no choice, but had to make a direct frontal attack. No maneuvers would help here. The blow would have to be struck at the enemy precisely where he was expecting it. One detachment of infantry and two platoons of commandos mounted on jeeps were ordered to the attack. They were told to take the hillock "at all costs"—words whose meaning is terrible at the front.

In the dark of night on the 12th of July the attacking force approached Hill 105, the infantry clambering through the dark, followed by the jeeps, which opened fire immediately. A sudden panic seized the Egyptians and they fled for their lives, leaving behind them cannons, Bren carriers, Piats, machine guns, ammunition, and dead.

Next day the enemy's artillery was silent along the entire front. Without understanding what had happened, everybody from Galon to Julia realized that there had been a change. Something big had happened.

IT WAS possible to rest, and rest was needed. Not a platoon was fit for action. But the commander, the weariest of them all, sensed that this moment had to be seized and the enemy attacked without let-up in order to deprive them of the chance to regroup and recover from the blow. His tired battalion commanders agreed.

On July 13, at six in the evening, an infantry company that had seen action for five consecutive nights, and which only the night before had participated in the capture of Hill 105, attacked Beit Afa. With that the initiative on the southern front passed once and for all into Jewish hands. Tel Aviv was saved, and the State of Israel with it.

ZANGWILL'S GHETTO IS NO MORE

The Passing of Whitechapel

BARNET LITVINOFF

If you were to take a walk down East London's Whitechapel Road today, starting by Woolworth's at the corner of Commercial Road and gazing at your reflection in the big furniture shops and the little haberdashers and the dingy restaurants and sour-smelling pubs, you might well ask yourself, "Is this the Whitechapel of story and legend?" As you scan the faces of tired, shabbily dressed housewives and bustling street salesmen, step warily on one side to avoid the dust-bowl outside the Salvation Army's Hostel for Working Men, look at the big clock on London Hospital, reach Mile End Gate and at last come to a dead halt—what a sense of frustration!

The truth is that Whitechapel Road is drab and uninteresting today, and—whisper it!—probably always was. Yet if you live now in fashionable North West London, on the ridge of Hampstead Heath by Swiss Cottage, or perhaps in a comfortable modern Golders Green villa where you employ a part-time gardener for your hedgerows and your hollyhocks, you will never admit it, so drenched are you with the glamor of Whitechapel. For Whitechapel is the home of your youth, and how you love it!

Almost every Jew you know, if he is English-born, and they mostly are in Golders Green, grew up in Whitechapel, attended the Jews' Free School as Israel Zangwill did and the old Marquis of Reading and Samuel Gompers; worked in tailors' sweatshops on the fourth floor of a Great Garden Street tenement; bought a pen'orth of chips in Tubby Isaacs'; laughed with Marie Lloyd at the Paragon; cried with Moscovitch at the Yiddish play; took a Turkish bath in Brick Lane at Schefzik's.

An English Jew traveling the world will be asked by a diamond magnate in Johannesburg: Is the bagel woman with the upturned orange-box for a stall still at her pitch in the Lane? Or by a Melbourne alderman: Do they still hold the exhibitions at the Art Gallery, or was it bombed? Or by a government official in Tel Aviv, perhaps the head of the information services: Is old Roberts still caretaker at Jubilee Street School? In Manhattan and Montreal from troupers working the English repertory stage and from Hollywood script-writers you will be plied with similar questions. Whitechapel is a place where everyone was proud to be born—but nobody wants to live.

Although born in Whitechapel, the present writer was taken at an early age to Bethnal Green, its Gentile neighbor (which meant, of course, that many shopkeepers and tradesmen were Jews). He is consequently part of the Whitechapel tradition, but actually not of its native generation. But many of the established Anglo-Jewish writers and journalists, and many middle-aged university dons, are of that generation, and they guard their memories nostalgically and fanatically. The great Whitechapel they tell of no

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The Whitechapel section of London, like the Lower East Side of New York, remains in some sense "home" for thousands of Jews whose parents were part of its bustling life and who themselves grew up on its streets. The section is no longer so active, and indeed was seriously damaged by the air raids of the war, but 25,000 Jews still live there. Barnet Litvinoff reports here on the life in Whitechapel as of 1950. Mr. Litvinoff was born in London in 1917 and attended the Sorbonne. He is a veteran of the Dunkirk evacuation and of three years in German and Italian prisoner of war camps. At present he is a member of the editorial board of the London *Zionist Review* and on the staff of the London press office of the Jewish Agency. He has written for periodicals in England, France, and the United States, and is the author of a radio play that was produced over the BBC.

longer exists in bricks and mortar, but in their memories and literary testaments it towers more monumentally than ever.

When the president of Jerusalem's Hebrew University was a boy, and Zangwill already a literary lion-cub, Whitechapel and its environs, with their ironically named streets like Christian Street (where practically every resident was Jewish) and Flower and Dean Street (where never a shrub grows), were already almost solidly ghettos. By the time of the First World War nine-tenths of the Jewish population of London, perhaps two hundred thousand people, lived there. There grew up something that was well known in Europe and in New York—a specifically Jewish folk culture. Yiddish newspapers, the Yiddish play, left-wing politics, tea-drinking sessions at the local restaurants, the evening promenade along the Whitechapel highway (called the "*shidduch* parade" right through till the 30's), and every kind of social, literary, and musical group. Nothing like it ever existed before in London, or probably ever will. For fifty years this era lasted, with its noisy argumentativeness and a gushing zest for life. Then the Jews moved away, and the district began to subside to quietude and homogeneity with the rest of London. Until finally Hitler's bombs cascaded down and not only the people, but their relics and the edifices they created, were gone.

Yiddish journalists there still are, and Anglo-Jewish writers who exhibit their longing for those days as other romantics for medieval Catholicism. Seldom do they take a walk down Petticoat Lane on a Sunday morning or visit an East End synagogue without transcribing onto paper the memories stirred of poets and painters and philanthropists who had brushed shoulders with them at Goide's Restaurant on their passage to the hall of fame. Destiny has taken these far afield. Bernard Shaw requisitioned one of them for a biographer and companion at Ayot St. Lawrence. Premier Ben Gurion another, to organize his war. General Smuts, a third; and an English countess, daughter of a field marshal, married a fourth. Two hundred thousand individuals can go a long way, when they are Jews, and the world is, after all, a small place, and fame easily won.

That boy, running to and fro, speaking volubly in an English that is still half-Yiddish, buying and selling and closing one eye cleverly as he fixes a deal with the top-machinist for a new pair of scissors? Sh! we are not so proud of the man he became. Only a few months ago he lived spaciously in Park Lane. His friends were cabinet ministers and his clients millionaires. We acknowledge him no more, he has betrayed us, spotlighting our Jewish knack for going places. They call him Sidney Stanley, though his names were many, as British newspapermen refused to let us forget; and how thankful those journalists were to Mr. Stanley for dropping onto their desks their best peacetime story since the abdication! Let us forget this master-mind of intrigue and look instead to this house, with its gaping holes for windows and the crumbly wall facing the bombsite. When it is rebuilt we shall ask the London County Council to put a plaque there. In it was born Isaac Rosenberg whom Edith Sitwell called the Poet of the War. He was killed in action in 1917.

Yet for my generation, and for that one rapidly reaching maturity whose cradle was elsewhere than in the East End, Whitechapel is not just a symbol or the subject of "good old days" articles in the London *Jewish Chronicle*. There are still twenty-five thousand Jews living there, mostly old folk and derelicts whom the upsurge of the times passed by, and tradespeople who have somehow stuck with their sweetshops. This is no less than the Jewish population of Leeds, often referred to as the most Jewish town in Britain. And the district till the last election had a Jewish Communist MP, whose constituency stood adjacent to the Prime Minister's. As recently as 1936 London Jewry with its allies fought a battle in this East End, when Sir Oswald Mosley tried to stage a victory march through Whitechapel Road, a march ending in ignominious retreat for the Blackshirts. Many a Jew, long expert in the dialectics of passive resistance, left his Golders Green ivory tower to fight that battle, which was Mosley's Waterloo.

But more than this, Whitechapel is no mere hollow symbol, for still surviving there is all the bureaucracy of Jewish communal life. Along Commercial Road you may feel alien and transplanted amidst the colorful array of dark-skinned mariners who have almost imperceptibly crept citywards from East India Dock Road, but you will still find there the headquarters of the Jewish burial societies. Across the road is the Jews' Temporary Shelter, where perhaps your parents slept the night they landed in Britain, and whose doors are still ever open to the narrowing stream of refugees on their first step out of the continent of Europe.

On Sunday morning, you will still come in your hundreds to join the solid mass of human beings, part Jew, part Gentile, that is swept of its own momentum along Petticoat Lane in search of a bargain, or to sell one. You will still come to register your marriage, even though the Great Synagogue is destroyed and business and prayer are conducted in a temporary building. Or you will come, probably, to arrange Hebrew classes for your child—or to investigate the curiosity of a stage production in Yiddish. You will come if you are a Communist because you will find a "militant" working class, and if you are Zionist because there are still plenty of children to work on; and you will come if you are a capitalist, for many a giant factory here grew from the tiny backroom workshops. If you are a "spiv" or a gambler, a "wide boy" in fact, you may often find yourself turning towards Whitechapel, to hear the talk of dog-racing men or to play poker through the night, strengthened periodically with pickled-herring sandwiches, and you will come because if you are clever and quick you can buy a watch without paying purchase-tax.

But mostly you will come as I did, to sample something of the past before the last of its living witnesses are gone and to discover if you can what was once the essence of Whitechapel, what was that vitality about which poets still sing in their less frequently published works and authors still write in their less successful and less artistic novels. You will leave disappointed, telling yourself as I did that you visited Whitechapel "on the wrong day," while knowing in your heart that there is no right day for Whitechapel any more.

My friend Joseph Leftwich, who is happily a living and articulate link with Zangwill and one of the few English writers of stature ready to acknowledge his debt to those hard but fertile times when the hay carts still rumbled along Whitechapel Road, tells me of the universal surprise at last year's exhibition called "East End Story" when returning wanderers discovered how small a part really the Jewish element played in the life of the district.

I WAS reminded of this as I stood at the corner of Mile End Road, and looked across at the area's greatest claim to fame: the pile of rubble that was the site of the Sidney Street siege. At No. 100, Peter the Painter and his Nihilist confederates resisted arrest by turning pistols on the surprised bobbies. There is an oft-reproduced photograph of top-hatted Winston Churchill, the 1911 Home Secretary with a nose for a story, peering warily from a doorway as police and military shot the criminals out. To this day, I understand, there lives nearby a Jewish tradesman who looked on with the young aristocrat. If you read the memoirs of retired Yard men you will be told that "the difficulties of tracking down the forgers and fences who thrived in Whitechapel were increased by the uncooperativeness of the many aliens inhabiting the district." Most of the aliens are now British subjects and dwell far away, but crime still haunts the alleys. Gambling and prostitution, I observe, are part of the East End's program of postwar rehabilitation. There is always someone to blame, and this time the scapegoat is the new colored element, which for some years has been taking over the slums my relatives and friends vacated.

LET me retrace my steps, for it is 10:30 at night and they are "turning them out"—an honored London routine to empty pubs, and fill streets with the wails of the banshee. But before I go I mutter my thanks that the People's Palace, where masses of London school children receive their introduction to classical music, lives on within a stone's throw and continues its Sunday evening policy of showing foreign films. I must linger a while at the narrow shop front behind whose cracked doors are the editorial offices of the Yiddish *Zeit*, and where, despite every frustration created by a diminishing circle of Yiddish readers and the shortage of newsprint, Morris Myer's family still puts out a daily paper. Here I experience my one nostalgic spasm. I am swept back to the days of childhood when the *Zeit* cost three halfpence, and my mother, after perusing it carefully and keeping it clean, would send me back with it to the news agent and a penny would be refunded. But this is hardly a reminiscence to compare with Leftwich's, who writes of the Sabbath ritual of purchasing for one farthing a can of boiling water from the *goyim*, so that tea could be brewed without sacrilegious fire lighting.

Night, though dark enough, is not kind enough to lend romance to my return journey along the wide highway. There are long, fearsome shadows where once a great boxing hall stood, and the young bloods like Kid Lewis and Kid Berg, direct heirs to the Mendoza tradition, received their baptism in the ring. There is also a long blank wall, but I am not too young to add the other three sides and fill the amphitheater with rows and rows of school children, and see myself among them, being introduced for the first time to a world called Zionism, and watching free of charge a film depicting happy, singing infants who, I am told, are Jews like me. The histories of Zionism will tell you that Herzl made his first public appearance at the turn of the century in this very Whitechapel, and though the great men with majestic Spanish names frowned, the people hailed him as their messiah.

Whitechapel's one hope for survival, it seems, lies in magazine articles. For what point would there be in restoring this old ghetto, as some romantics wish? Even in its heyday it was a burden on the generosity and pride of the wealthy Jews, comfortable in their pleasaunces of Stepney Green, and hastening along this very road with Rothschild and Montefiore to the Sabbath services at the Great Synagogue and Bevis Marks. They complained then, as they do now, that the youth was revolutionary and atheist. They worried then, as they do now, because there was talk of the alien menace; and they worried then because Jews have a habit of concentrating, not of dispersing, of hanging their origins and their prejudices on the lintels of their homes. In the columns of the London *Jewish Chronicle,* founded, it will proudly tell you, in 1841, you will read almost daily of efforts to restore the glamor of the days gone. Last year that glamor almost revived; for Dr. Solomon Gaon was inducted at Bevis Marks, the half-neglected synagogue of the Spanish and Portuguese, as Hacham, head of the Sephardic community—the first Hacham in many years. How cleverly, how sincerely that story was written up by a descendant, yes, one may already call her a descendant, of the previous Hacham, Dr. Moses Gaster, in the columns of a famous Conservative weekly!

AS FOR the twenty-five thousand, they are neither to be admired nor pitied. Some of them stay in the East End because they have become very rich there, some because they are very poor. A young and boisterous uncle-in-law of mine, now nearing sixty, remains because his Dutch ancestry has made him more Gentile than Jew, and the only talk he knows is the language of the faubourg, hewn rough and scattered with army adjectives, and his only hobby is to linger in the pubs, waiting, like those friends of his who carry with them the smell of Dr. Johnson's London, till turning-out time at half past ten. He is a peculiar Jew, without ambition. Whitechapel and Aldgate, which together make up the borough of Stepney, form the one surviving happy hunting ground of such Jews. There alone, out of the entire British Commonwealth, will you find Jewish street cleaners and lavatory attendants, Jewish newspaper-sellers. Jewish beggars have their homes there too, but they ply the trade in the congeries of Stoke Newington and Stamford Hill, which they can reach by a twenty-minute journey on the "Jews' express," the "647" trolley-bus.

Hither, also, to these greener meadows come Jewish youth in search of amusement and education. Whitechapel's Toynbee Hall, the scene of old-Etonian Attlee's conversion to socialism and today held together by the enthusiasm of a descendant of Lord Tennyson, they repudiate, leaving it free for the serious bank clerks and bakers' roundsmen who come from miles away to study dramatic art and Esperanto. The young Jews and Jewesses prefer the Zionism indigenous to the North and North West, the politics of Swiss Cottage, the high society of the Dorchester Hotel. A few of them are banded in the ex-servicemen's and Communist organizations, and become a flying squad with all London and the Home Counties as their province, to heckle Mosley on Clapham Common or the Reading market place, perhaps to scuffle with his followers. For the Communists this is good policy; it gives them a role in English affairs they could not otherwise obtain. As for the ex-servicemen, they can point a sneering finger at the "gentlemanly approach" to Jewish anti-defamation pursued by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, which fights the Mosley threat through the medium of resolutions forwarded to government departments, while they themselves are sent to martyrdom for a month for "causing a breach of the King's peace."

No, THEY are not to be pitied, the twenty-five thousand. In the East End there are clubs in plenty; and Circle House, with its old Bundist tradition, heir to the first socialist group ever to be formed in Britain, the Jewish Socialist Party of Whitechapel, which anticipated by six years Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation, thrives in its own busy way. Over the platform in its meeting hall there used to be a large Shield of David, and beneath that sign I well remember hawklike, eloquent, and deeply sincere John Strachey telling us Jews in October 1939 that the war against Hitler, which Russia then regarded impassively from the ringside, was not a workers' war, but a capitalist one like all the others. Strachey has recanted now, and is Britain's War Minister, which shows that it is not only the East End that has changed. Certainly one of the most interesting of the East End's changes is its rejection last February of the Communist who for five years represented it volubly in Parliament. Phil Piratin, graduate of Whitechapel and the garment union atmosphere which have together bred many a radical in their time, was a member of what I believe was called the Communist party's "Jewish Committee." He and Jack Gaster, another descendant of Moses Gaster, were charged with the task of winning English Jewry to "revolutionary socialism." But Communism is rapidly becoming a thing of the past in Britain.

Whitechapel's major headaches in 1950, like Bermondsey's and Bethnal Green's, are housing and juvenile delinquency. The housing problem is shared by all, but Mr. Basil Henriques, for fifty years warden of the Bernhard Baron Settlement in the East End, will tell you that few of the culprits coming to his Juvenile Court are Jewish.

The golden age of Jewish Whitechapel was characterized by law and order. School and *shul* were regularly attended; anarchism was mostly confined to the realm of teashop chatter; drunkenness to the Gentiles. Perhaps this was because a newly migrated community is always looking to better times. Whitechapel's Jewry differed from the other elements there because it was optimistic, saved for tomorrow, and worked for its children. Zangwill's formula forty years ago may best provide the clue as to why Whitechapel in this mid-century year offers little satisfaction to the visitor who, having grown to manhood in another London district, is a visitor from Mars: "The ghetto," he says, "looks back to Sinai and forward to the millennium."

THE FIRST THREE STARS

A Story

DAVID SCHREIBER

"STAY by the window and watch," my father told me. "Watch for the first three stars in the sky over there above the house. That's west," he told me. "When three stars the same size show in the sky, then the Sabbath is over and a new day has begun."

"I'm cold. I want to go home," I said.

My father, tall, gaunt, bent, and kindly, looked down at me as I huddled in my heavy mackinaw with the collar turned up, my knees on the bench, my nose at the window. "You've got your warm winter coat on, and your woolen hat and ear muffs. You shouldn't be cold. We'll go when the Sabbath is over."

Then, because that's the way he always was, he took the opportunity to give me a little lesson.

"Chaimke," he said, "it's an honor for a Jewish boy to sit in the *bet hamidrash,* in the house of learning, in the synagogue basement with the grown men as they pray, and be the watchman for the three stars and the beginning of the new week."

"But I don't understand, I never understand what you're praying."

"That doesn't matter. As long as you are here among Jewish things and Jewish words, you are learning. You learn the feel of Jewishness and that is the best kind of understanding."

"If my nose is running when we get home, Mommy will holler at you."

"So wipe your nose," he said opening an enormous blue and white handkerchief for me to honk into. I honked. He said, "And while you watch for the stars listen to what we are saying."

Some of this that my father was telling me was in Hebrew. I understood Hebrew, even though I was only a bit past seven, or because I was that young. My father and mother made it a deliberate practice to speak a lot of Hebrew in the house. They were of a new movement then, thirty years ago, to make Hebrew a living language for a living people. They practiced on their son what they hoped to teach the world.

It was a strange language my parents spoke to their son. The strains of its melody are still in my ears although the vocabulary is long since lost—half English, half Hebrew, but not Yiddish at all. Yiddish was all around us and my folks spoke it fluently, but it was not to be the language for their son, who they hoped would grow into a spokesman for their ideals and a speaker of *lashon kodesh,* the holy language.

"I know the way home," I said, "I can get there myself."

"But you will go home with me. It is an honor for the young ones to escort the grown men home from *bet hamidrash* at the beginning of the week."

Here, too, was a strangeness that my father was trying to implant in me. Saturday evening was the beginning of the week to us. Evening and the first three stars—not midnight—marked the beginning of the day. The late afternoon of Saturday closed the seventh day of the week, and the evening of Saturday was the new week's beginning. Public school didn't work that way, and neither did the calendar and the clock, but in my father's Hebrew School classes—conducted five days a week in this same *bet hamidrash*—I had to learn of a different calendar because we Jews were different. Whatever my father told me

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about us, it had the same meaning. We were different.

"But I've been in *shul* all Saturday," I said in Hebrew-English-Yiddish. "Mommy says I should get more fresh air."

"When you speak in Hebrew do not say Saturday. Saturday comes from Saturn, a Roman god. The proper word is Sabbath, you know that."

Of course I knew it, and he made me feel proud of my knowledge, so I nodded. There was no revolting against my father. He was too mild, too sure, too right. If I ever kicked against anything, he smiled as though I would know better later on, and he was not angry, so that there was nothing to kick against. To revolt, you need a visible enemy, solid and hard, preferably a physical tyrant. Then revolt is only justice. But there was no tyranny, no enmity, in the tall, smooth-shaven man with the gaunt nose and bony cheeks, standing above me, laughing with me, laughing at me, with his thin lips and his warm and deep-sunk eyes.

BEHIND us, ten bearded men with their hats on swayed and chanted over some tremendous tomes, singing with a monotonous rhythm from the *Pirke Avot,* the book of the Ethics of the Fathers. A single naked electric bulb, hanging from a fraying wire, a light that had been on all last night and all this morning, shone on the pages, but hardly enough for the men to pick out the print. It was no matter. These men knew their books by heart. Only half a glance at a phrase could set off a train of remembered words carrying them verbatim through a dozen pages. They chanted. They swayed in toward the table, back toward the wall, and their voices rose and swelled and fell in fluting murmurs.

In the middle of the table among the books were long chipped platters with wet gnawed herring bones and herring heads on them. On the frayed linen tablecloth there were gnawed crusts of black bread, empty glasses, and a bottle with a little of the purple-black wine still at the bottom.

For on Sabbath afternoons the elders of the congregation, a chicken slaughterer, a leather worker, a fruit peddler, a capmaker, the synagogue *shammes,* a butcher, my father—the Hebrew teacher—a tailor, another tailor, and the congregation's rabbi—my grandfather—ate of the *shalosh seudot,* the third meal of the Sabbath, and now they were reading and singing and remembering the precepts of their forefathers, because their forefathers had once ordained that they should.

The morning they had spent upstairs in the synagogue proper. They had lunched in their homes and then had come back to the *bet hamidrash* for afternoon prayers and then the third banquet of wine, black bread, and herring, their gossip, their teaching, and their learning. My grandfather sat at one end of a long table, and the men sat in two rows, five on one side, four on the other, on the hard wooden benches. My father, merely the rabbi's son-in-law and not a son, was farthest away from the head of the table, but nearest to me.

My grandfather lifted his bearded head from the pages to elucidate a particularly subtle and witty passage, weaving his thumb widely and gracefully as though it were a needle basting a length of soft cloth. He noticed that—with my father talking to me—the number at the table had decreased.

There had to be ten at the table or there was no official congregation. Ten was a minimum for a gathering of Israel's elders. Ten was a *minyan.* Ten was a quorum.

But before his attention was taken away, he was licking his lips and letting his crow-footed eyes crinkle and sparkle at the keen and tender logic of the passage before him.

"Blessed is he who doeth justice all the time.

"Yet—the teachers and sages ask—how is it possible for a man to do justice all the time?"

My grandfather broke in on himself, going from Talmudic Hebrew or Aramaic to Yiddish, "A man must sleep, a man must eat. All the time means twenty-four hours a day, and is it possible when a man is sleeping or eating or tending to his wants, to tend to matters of justice too? Yet it stands written 'all the time.'

"And the teachers answer, 'Yes, it is possible!'

"How?

" 'By adopting an orphan!'

"Ah," my grandfather said in Yiddish, "this is wisdom."

His audience laughed and applauded.

The enjoyment of perfect logic faded back into the gray-black beard when the old man saw my father out of the conversation and the *minyan* disrupted.

"Nu?" my grandfather grunted.

My father answered in Yiddish, "The little boy is cold."

"Nu?"

He doesn't care if I'm cold—I thought. He just wants to do all kinds of justice and adopt orphans, but he doesn't care if his own grandchild is freezing for nothing.

But my father did care. He took one long-legged stride to the table and hooked up a bottle and glass with one hand, poured the rest of the wine for me, and told me to drink.

It was sweet and it warmed me.

He whispered, "Watch for three stars. Not Venus, not the evening star—that's a planet. But three real stars, no planets in the western sky."

THE night before, Friday night, while the Sabbath candles were still dripping and sputtering in pools of their own wax and our kitchen walls leaped with the strange shadows that the candles cast, my father had told me a very strange story.

He was a wonderful storyteller, my father, and he did not confine himself to the Bible for his tales. All the world's literature was source material, and always his stories had a point. If I could not see the point he would say "Later, later you will see." He told me the stories—Greek tales, Norse tales, Roman tales, Indian tales—in Hebrew. For Friday night was my night and my father gave me his undivided attention.

This story concerned a little Jewish boy, an Italian or French Jewish boy, as I remember, born a thousand years ago. It seems that there was a pogrom in the town where the little boy lived and the Jews were beaten and slaughtered and exiled. But the little boy was hidden away from the cruel Christians, and later was found by a monk. The boy was taken to a monastery. He grew up as a Christian, and eventually became a monk himself, then an abbot, then a bishop and then a cardinal, and finally the Pope himself. And he was born a Jew. And yet—my father told me—when the truth of his birth came out, the Pope renounced his great and powerful office and went back to his people.

Why? Because he was already seven when he was found by the monk, and for seven years his Jewishness had been ingrained in him. "The Christians understand that. One of their Popes has said, 'Give me a child until he is six, and he is ours for life.' "

I should understand that too, my father said. "When as a little boy you are a Jew among Jewish things, the Jewishness remains with you always."

My grandfather would never have told me a story like that. Never would he have allowed himself to utter the word Pope. Or if he did, it would have been with a slight spitting and wiping of the lips.

I said to my father, "Is that why you make me stay in *shul* when the other kids are playing in the alley?"

My father didn't answer. He bent over as though to kiss me on the forehead but he only ruffled my hair. My father would never allow himself to kiss me. He was ill, with a coughing, spitting illness, and he and my mother were both afraid that I could catch his illness with a kiss.

SO I squirmed on the bench in the drafty basement of a synagogue and heard but only half listened to the chanting of Aramaic, and swinging and full-voweled rhythms of Hebrew, and the chatter of Yiddish, as my father coughed and the others belched their wine and snorted up snuff, and filled the time between afternoon and evening prayers with another sort of praying.

Tired of looking at a sky that would never produce a star, I turned to look at the Holy Ark across the room. There was a curtain in front of it with two braided lions, rampant. Sleazy and faded, all the tinsel had raveled off from one of the paws of the left one, and only some threads rested on a braided outline of the Tablets of the Ten Commandments.

Above that was a dim orange-tinted electric bulb, supposed to look like a burning oil wick in a dish. This was the Eternal Light, and it burned all day, every day, and through all the nights of the year. If you squinted at it, it took on the shape of a slanted eye, and the Eye was God and God was the Eye, and it was always looking at you. In the dim afternoon it was a frightening thing, and fascinating. For the Eye of God could see you always. I squinted and the Eye seemed to bulge and grow and come toward me. I shook my head to get the image away and turned back to the window.

I pasted my nose against the glass, and held my sight to the apple-green sunset sky above the tenement tops of Brooklyn across the street and to the west. It was December, close to Christmas, and the days were the shortest of the year, but time was long that afternoon, and the minutes were cold. I felt the Eye of God looking through my woolen hat and reading the thoughts under my skull, thoughts that said I wanted to get out of the synagogue and out of the sight of God, and I was afraid because God knew.

My nose ran and the mucus mixed with the frost on the window. I rubbed peepholes on the glass with my sleeve.

"Daddy, I see, I see a star!"

My father came to the window, while my grandfather grunted. His elders sneezed their snuff, coughed and frowned. The *shammes* spit in the general direction of a cuspidor.

I rubbed the icing off the window high up at my father's eye level, so he could see how right I was.

"It's only Venus," he said, "but keep looking hard. The harder you look, the sooner we'll go home." Then in Hebrew: "But it is not good to wish God's Sabbath away too quickly. It's ingratitude for a gift."

I held tight to my father's sleeve, wouldn't let go. When one appeared, one bright rich light in a now darkening sky, then others were due any second.

My grandfather said, "*Nu,* Spiro!" He always called my father by his last name.

MY FATHER jerked his arm away from me. Something dropped out of his sleeve and tinkled on the floor. Everyone looked down at it. My father turned red on his high cheekbones. It was a nickel. Jews didn't carry money on Sabbath. His face burning, my father toyed with the nickel with his toe. I stooped down to pick it up and froze in a half-bent position. I was under the Eye of God, but the nickel was already in my palm.

My grandfather's eyes blazed at me. His face was in half-shadow and he seemed to have but one eye—and it was like the Eye of God. Mutely, humbly, my father was showing the lining of his sleeve to my grandfather and the congregation. The two tailors were particularly interested, and solemn. They understood how stray coins wandered through linings of coats from holes in the breast pockets to holes in sleeves. The chicken slaughterer was laughing. The *shammes* smirked. My grandfather was grim.

But the nickel was in my palm, and now my face was burning with my father's.

"*Nu!*" my grandfather grunted. It was a command.

"Keep the nickel," my father said. "Until you are thirteen, and an adult in the congregation, I must assume all your sins. I'm responsible. Keep it."

My father was a brave man. He wasn't afraid of the Eye of God, or of my grandfather.

I couldn't drop the nickel and yet I couldn't keep it.

I looked through the window. The stars were coming out. I counted one, then another, and still another and let out a shout. "Yippee! Three of them. I see three!" The

Sabbath was over, the nickel was mine, and I had committed no sin.

My grandfather shut his book with a slam. Now he too was red in the face.

The *shammes* checked his gold-encased watch. My father and two others formed a committee of three to inspect the sky. I rubbed peepholes for everybody. There were three stars and more, undeniably, over the tenement roofs, and the long winter afternoon in the cold damp basement was over.

My grandfather said, "*Nu,* Spiro, *maariv,*" ordering my father to officiate at the nightly prayer, or rather the next day's prayer.

My father raced through the rituals in a humming chant, and the men responded just as hastily.

Apparently, the chilly little seven-year-old Chaimke wasn't the only one who had been feeling the strain of holiness and had had enough for one day. But the words themselves that the men spluttered and muttered were biddings to the Sabbath—the Sabbath Queen, the Sabbath Bride—to stay a little longer.

After that there was a final ceremony, candle lighting again, and drinking of another cup of wine which according to the blessing spoken symbolized a differentiation between the Sabbath and the weekday, between the true God and the idols, the Chosen People and the peoples of the earth. Always the differentiation.

That done, the group broke into informal conversation and several men rushed to the door. This was unseemly to my grandfather.

"*Nu,*" he said.

Deliberately the old man reached into a drawer and drew out a tin of homemade cigarettes. His eyes glowed. He licked one into shape and toyed with it for several minutes. Then he took it to the just lighted candle, put it between his lips, inhaled from the candle, held the smoke in his lungs until he could hold it no longer, and then let the smoke out in two streams from his nostrils. Blue smoke shot down the front of his beard, the ends curling like horns, curling the way his beard curled, cloudy and outward.

Ritually, the candle lighting ended the Sabbath, but to my grandfather the cigarette must have been just as important. Weekdays he smoked forty and fifty a day. Sabbath, because of the injunction not to work or make a fire—making a fire was work—he smoked none. Years later, after I had learned to smoke, I began to realize what cruel self-control the old man put upon himself to obey his Law.

OUTSIDE, the sky was full of stars. The first three stars were there, and with them a thousand and a million more. A crescent moon hung over the tenement tops, a thin moon, a moon without power to dim the stars.

My father and I paused for a moment on the top step of the six leading from the synagogue basement to the street. I saw Timmy Mulcahy and one of his older brothers—he had eight older brothers—coming our way. They had a Christmas tree on their shoulders. Timmy was carrying the sawed-off trunk end, and his brother the tapering green-smelling crest. I clutched my nickel in one fist and held tight to my father's wrist with the other. I always used to have trouble with Timmy. He was in my class, but he was a year older than I, and taller by a head, and inches huskier across the chest. He was a kid gang-leader, too, and if he caught me alone when he knew I had a nickel there would be a fight, and chances were I'd lose the nickel and the fight both. But I wasn't alone now, and anyway Timmy was too busy with his Christmas tree. Its branches waving and dipping with each step Timmy took, the Christmas tree passed in front of the synagogue and away.

I held my father's sleeve to my cheek, looking up into his face. We started for home. I was happy. I was richer by a nickel. I was out of the way of the Eye of God. At home my father would probably tell me another story, maybe one about why three stars in the sky meant a new day, and why we shouldn't talk about Venus or Saturn in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

"THERE'S NO CITY LIKE SAN FRANCISCO"

Profile of a Jewish Community

EARL RAAB

"THERE is no city like San Francisco," the Jews of the Golden Gate say with some conviction. But they say it in two different ways. Some say it happily, with an expansive smile. Others say it drily, and sadly shake their heads. As is usually the case in such matters, both are probably right.

The almost universal experience of any visitor to San Francisco is nostalgia-at-first-sight. This is normally the kind of reaction reserved for small villages tucked away on some by-road in a farming country with an ancient pitcher pump in the square, an ambling populace of about five hundred, an atmosphere of more or less live-witted serenity—and a single national origin and cultural heredity. San Francisco's population is three quarters of a million. It is the commercial and banking center of the West. It is a polyglot city that has been heavily infiltrated by a dozen nationalities. Withal, there is no mistaking its village air of friendly order and homogeneity.

There is the pitcher pump, deliberately, in the form of the rheumatic old cable cars. There is the serenity, in good measure: sidewalks that are wide and fit the people loosely; greens and flower banks, and little flower vends on every third corner; streets that dip and bob like a merry carnival coaster; and a population that rushes only when it has some place to go.

Of course San Francisco considers itself a sophisticated and gaily flavored town ("Bagdad on the Bay"), but there are few physical evidences of upstart vulgarity and self-conscious bohemianism such as mark many modern American metropolises. Thomas Mann (in concert with others) has called San Francisco the most continental city in the country.

San Francisco is a genteel city. San Francisco is a poised city. San Francisco knows where it's been and where it's going.

Confronted with it, what East-weary mortal can resist nostalgia?

And what Jew will not sigh just a little longer than the rest?

THERE are fifty-five thousand Jews in San Francisco, and not even the historic traces of a ghetto. There is a Jewish community that has been called, with reason, the wealthiest, per capita, in the country. There is at the same time a startling poverty of anti-Semitic tradition. San Francisco, for cities of its size, is the nation's "white spot" of anti-Jewish prejudice.

In near-top-level social and country clubs there is Jewish membership and even charter membership. Gentlemen's agreements are quite uncommon in its quality residential sections, old or new. In filling public and quasi-public posts, there seems to be no trace of a policy of exclusion or "quota" or even discriminatory hesitation. At times Jewish citizens have concurrently held the presidencies

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When EARL RAAB found that he would have to leave his Maine farm and become an urban dweller once again, he needed little time to reflect before deciding that of all the cities he knew, San Francisco was the one in which he wanted to live. In this article—one of COMMENTARY's series of portraits of American Jewish communities—Mr. Raab reports on the quality and nature of Jewish life in the Golden Gate city. Mr. Raab wrote "In Promised Dixieland" in the May 1948 COMMENTARY and "Report from the Farm" in the December 1949 issue.

of the Chamber of Commerce, the Community Chest, the Board of Education, Art, Fire, and Harbor Commissions, and many other appointive and elective posts; it is a situation that cannot be duplicated in any other city with a 6 per cent Jewish concentration.

Of course, "anti-Semitism" is not a word without meaning in San Francisco. The Jewish Survey and B'nai B'rith Community Committee handles anti-defamation matters, and across its desk every day the usual reports pass in light but steady flow. An employment agency whose cards are marked parenthetically "No J's," or "Blonds only." Private co-operative housing ventures that won't include Jews. A sidewalk altercation where someone turns out to be not only a "damned –" but a "damned Jewish –."

Under the impact of Hitler, a Nazi Bund was formed in the city, and a "Friends of Germany." In the large Italian population there was a backwash of admiration for Mussolini's Fascism. While these organizations have disappeared without even an underground trace, the people that joined them, it must be assumed, are still around. So are upwards of a hundred thousand newcomers from the Midwest and the South who came to the city to work and live during the last war.

There is, then, a steady incidence of employment discrimination and of petty uglinesses, but they are relatively infrequent and without pervasive quality; a pattern more of scattered anti-Semitism than of any policies, regulations, or encased habit. Professional anti-Semitism has never been a paying proposition in San Francisco. Efforts in that direction have always been short-lived. The tip-off is that the latrine-wall type of anti-Semitic literature that has turned up in San Francisco has been date-lined Chicago and Los Angeles, and mailed in.

So far as the city and its institutions are concerned, the Jew is a first-class citizen. It may well be that he can live in San Francisco with a greater degree of personal dignity than in any other large city in the country.

The attractive face of San Francisco, and the attractive status of the Jewish community within it, have common causes. The histories of the city and of its Jewish community have developed together along a shared course.

In 1848, of course, San Francisco was a mule-stop. When gold was cried and the West exploded, and San Francisco became the center of new wealth and of wealth-seekers, Jews were there with the first wave. They were, in the main, immigrants from Germany, although there were many from England, France, and Alsace-Lorraine. The second surge of Jewish pioneers in the early 50's contained some East Europeans. They came the hard ways, the only ways, across the hazardous continent or over the Isthmus. During the High Holy Days of 1849, services were held in a tent on the old Embarcadero near the waterfront.

While the mass of the forty-niners went scrabbling into the hills for gold, there were surer fortunes to be made in the city. One Jewish immigrant landed with his baggage in '49 and immediately invested a hundred dollars in stationery, which he sold in front of a hotel at 500 per cent profit. After a short interlude of playing a piano in a honky-tonk for an ounce of gold and a "grab" (literally a handful) of silver, he bought a store and began buying up trunks from gold speculators anxious to get into the hills. Selling these again, he made five or six thousands in seven or eight weeks. Soon, dozens of boxlike little stores were set up by his fellow Jews along the sprawling streets, heaped with hard-to-get clothing and merchandise shipped by friends and relatives in the East.

Other Jews played a part in the creation of the financial institutions on which San Francisco's economy was to rest. They turned banker, money broker, exchange dealer. Names like Davidson, Priest, Dyer, Glazier, and Wormser were identified with the giant financial transactions that became necessary with Europe and with the East. The London, Paris, and American bank was founded by the Lazards. The Seligmans helped create the Anglo-American bank. The directorates of a half-dozen other mushrooming banks bore Jewish names. Jews became leading realty brokers, founders of engineering enterprises, and manipulators of the grain exchange. They were in on the ground floor of a speculative venture that swelled to fantastic and permanent proportions, and they made fantastic and permanent fortunes in the process. They also helped construct the basic economy of the new community of San Francisco. One of the differences between a

"Shylock" and a "financial genius" is, after all, the size of his enterprise.

Further than that, some of these Jewish immigrants had brought with them uncommon strains of culture and education and qualities of leadership, and many of them plunged immediately into civic life. Samuel Marx was made United States Appraiser of the Port of San Francisco in 1851 and Joseph Shannon was County Treasurer in the same year. In 1852, Elkan Heydenfeldt and Isaac Cardozo were members of the state legislature, and Heydenfeldt was also Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court from 1852 to 1857.

The San Francisco *Herald* in 1851 struck the note of respect that was to be characteristic in generations to follow: "The Israelites constitute a numerous and intelligent class of our citizens and conduct themselves with great propriety and decorum. They are industrious and enterprising and make worthy members of our community."

From the beginning, the Jews were conspicuous for their sense of community. The first two welfare organizations in San Francisco were set up by Jews. In 1850 the Eureka Benevolent Society was organized to help the needy, and it still exists as the Jewish Family Service. As the little clothing stands turned into large department stores, and the money counters into financial empires, the Jews—feeling an understandable kinship with the city—began to make large financial contributions to the general community life.

This tradition, as well as the tradition of civic participation, has persisted until today. A startling number of the pools, parks, libraries, museums, and halls that are available to the public at large, bear familiar Jewish names, aside from the many institutions that are administered under Jewish agency auspices but are non-sectarian in character (such as the very new and splendiferous Maimonides Hospital for chronic ailments, which serves a specific community need). Even the more private support of the cultural institutions of the city by the Jews has been too frequent to escape public attention—the music critic of the *Chronicle* recently reported that he had been informed that about 40 per cent of the deficit of the San Francisco symphony orchestra is written off by three Jewish families.

The fact is that the Jews in San Francisco have never been cast in the role of "intruder." This was historically impossible. There was no aristocracy in California in 1849. There was only a rag-tail gang of money-hungry pioneers, of heterogeneous origins, welded together into a "frontier brotherhood" community. As the "first families" became incrusted, they became incrusted necessarily in amalgam with the "first families" of the Jewish community.

The Jews aside, San Francisco has maintained a degree of tolerance for minority groups that has not obtained in other cities along the coast. (Notoriously: Los Angeles.) One is prompted to speculate on the reasons for this, not only partially to explain the relationship between San Francisco and its Jewish community, but also to explain something of the nature of the Jewish community itself.

San Francisco boomed in 1849 and it has not had a really serious boom since. It was built on California gold and Nevada silver, and settled down as a financial and commercial center. It has never changed its basic character. The recent great industrial eruptions in the West—with their accompanying invasions of "barbarian hordes" from the East and the Midwest and the South, and their extensions of eastern power and influence—which have boomed and burst cities like Los Angeles and Oakland, in the main by-passed San Francisco, and were reflected only in its increased prosperity as a financial center. Indeed, San Francisco is physically not capable of much expansion along industrial or population lines. It is a compact city, bounded on three sides by water, and on the other by a number of small communities jealous of their identity. It has been estimated that, just by virtue of physical limitations, San Francisco's top population would be around a million. As a matter of fact, the artificial surge in population which San Francisco experienced as a result of wartime activity has in large part already been dissipated. (At the end of the recent census, policemen and firemen were dispatched by frantic city officials to ring doorbells in an attempt to find untallied citizens and bring the census figure somewhere near the special 1945 figure. But, alas, almost a hundred thousand estimated people had flown the coop.

San Francisco is thus a middle-class, white-collar city. (It has the highest average percentage of office-building occupancy and the greatest telephone density in the country.) It is also a city whose top social and economic layers have remained fairly well preserved. As a result it has a conservative cast, with accompanying overtones of unblurred tradition and general *noblesse oblige*. (To be sure, it has also had a rather violent labor history—notably the general strike of 1934. But since San Francisco is not, like Detroit, a city of industries with a large industrial working class, its labor history has had surprisingly little effect upon the "tone" of living.)

All this has worked, of course, to preserve undisturbed the status of the Jew in the community. It has also worked to preserve the internal structure and character of the Jewish community itself. The Jewish population has increased, along with the general population, not by spectacular leaps, but by normal accretion. And the Jews attracted to San Francisco have generally been those who would not tend to disrupt the community's basic character. There have never been in San Francisco, for instance, the job opportunities that would encourage a mass influx of Eastern Europeans of the first generation. (The garment industry is small-sized with about an 8 per cent concentration of Jewish workers. There is no other Jewish "proletariat" to speak of.)

THERE are many who claim, however, that the favorable position of the Jew in San Francisco is not just a derivative of the history and nature of the city, but also of the "historical position" and "astute leadership" of the old Jewish families who have maintained their identity and influence over several generations. This claim certainly has some truth. On the other hand, it is also true that out of this "historical position" and "astute leadership" by the older Jewish families there has developed a deep-rooted set of conflicts and a Jewish community on the verge of schism.

This schism is not so notable for its actual violence or disruptive effect, or for the number of people involved, as it is for its symptomatic quality and its implications for American Jewry in general. The history of the conflict is not just a petty scrap for power (which it sometimes has all the earmarks of being), or a local fight for "democracy," or an ideological dispute on this or that specific; but it seems ultimately a reflection of sharp differences in approaching the fundamental problems of Jewish identity in America.

It is only recently that San Francisco has seen the dramatic enactment of this conflict. But there have long been people who felt privately or semi-privately that the Jewish community was "moribund," that Jewish life as such was "marginal," that the organs of Jewish expression in the city were muffled and misdirected, that Jewish community organizations were not representative, that leadership needed changing.

When these critics talk about the "leadership," they know exactly whom they mean: certain members of the old and influential families who have firmly held their rein on community organizational life, and particularly on such agencies as the Survey Committee which long served as the *de facto* public relations body for the Jewish community. But when they talk about "autocracy," they are not always clear as to exactly why, if the dissidents were in large number, no remedial action was ever effectively attempted. The explanations run variously that: the leadership was entrenched; the leadership had the money and the facilities; the atmosphere was "such as to smother" any creative activity; the body of the community was mired in a long tradition of uninterest in Jewish matters; they themselves had developed no effective leadership. Always, however, for a full explanation, it seemed necessary to add a mysterious ingredient, sometimes referred to as the San Francisco "x" factor. (Someone postulated that if a half dozen Jews of similar background, Jewish intensity, and ideology, were settled three in Los Angeles and three in San Francisco, they would be found to be very different groups in outlook and activity after five years.)

The fact is that it took nothing less than the catalysts of Hitler and the State of Israel to bring the latent elements to a boil.

IN 1943, when the extraordinary horrors of Nazi genocide in Eastern Europe reached a publicity peak, mass meetings were conducted everywhere in this country. In San Francisco, preliminary deliberations stretched over two months. A modest conference was at first suggested and it became clear that the "traditional leadership" as such was reluctant to sponsor a mass political meeting of an obtrusively Jewish nature that had no precedent in the city's history. A provisional committee was formed and a call was sent out for representatives. A reported fifty-three organizations responded. A prominent section of the traditional leadership, including the Survey Committee, refused to participate, personally or organizationally. On June 17, 1943, at the Civic Auditorium, more than ten thousand people packed the hall to hear Thomas Mann, Eddie Cantor, and others.

Shortly afterwards, two prominent Russian Jews, Solomon Michoels and Itzik Feffer (the latter has since been "liquidated"), were sent to this country by the Soviet Union, then our "staunch ally," to "bind up the American Jews into one anti-fascist bloc in common with the Russian Jews." They were received by public dignitaries and by Jewish communities at large meetings throughout the nation. Again, and with the Soviet stigma lending them added conviction, the "traditional leadership" declined to lend support to a mass San Francisco reception. Under the same sponsorship as the previous meeting, the Civic Auditorium was again filled to capacity on August 31, this time for the two Russians.

The impact of these successes, and the emergence of some earnest young men of leadership caliber, led to a round of discussions and conferences on the possibility of reconstituting organizational life in the community. A United Council was formed by the "new coalition" of organizations to provide some channel for "representative community expression." This left the community in deep breach. A number of dismayed individuals immediately pressed for a compromise between the two camps. Several of the United Council groups were thrown into turmoil and there ensued a brief period of labyrinthine political activity out of which the United Council emerged an abortion. One of their larger groups had seceded; conciliation was the apparent order of the day, the United Council was ditched, and the compromise Association of Jewish Organizations (AJO) was formed, in full convention, to include all the elements of the community.

But, lo and legerdemain, when the smoke cleared, the AJO was revealed as an organ of traditional policy and of traditional leadership, and the cries of "aristocracy" and "no representation" were undiminished in vigor.

There is a lot of political over-the-fencing about if and why and how the AJO is "undemocratic by constitution and intent." (Example: Should the Welfare Fund have representation, as it now does, for every one hundred twenty-five members, giving it a balance of power, although there is no voting constituency and the delegates are appointed "from the top"; if not, what about the people who would not otherwise be represented and, "Where would you get a hall big enough to hold a vote of the Fund membership anyway?")

And there is some question of how the "opposition," claiming to represent the "popular" sentiment, having been a coalition of fifty-three separate groups, and having pulled in audiences of ten thousand people at the occasion of their mass meetings, could not exercise enough control in open convention to scotch the "undemocratic" provisions of the AJO in the first place. Answers of "sinister influence," "inequality of leadership," discouragement at the demise of the United Council, probably must be supplemented by some consideration of the San Francisco "x" factor.

But the central fact was that against the first major attempt to unseat them, the Old Guard firmly maintained their role as the community leadership.

IN 1948 a picket line was set up in front of the British consulate to protest the British refusal to allow refugees to debark in Palestine. The Survey Committee promptly dispatched a letter of apology to the consulate, disavowing the demonstration. A representative of the irate picketers wrote a letter to the public press, disavowing the apology.

In the fall of 1949, several "Where Do You Stand" and "You Are Not in Exile" anti-Zionist advertisements were paid for by the American Council for Judaism and were run in the press. The Survey Committee tried to dissuade the Council from this step, offering to publish, in lieu of the ads, a brief statement of policy under the name of the Survey Committee. The Council, however, felt that their ads should run, which they did. The Survey Committee published its own statement, anyway, "in the interests of Jewish public relations in San Francisco." This statement embodied an attack on Ben Gurion and the late Daniel Frisch for remarks that they had made concerning the responsibilities of American Jews to Israel.

This incident again brought to a boil those people who felt that the Survey Committee was: (1) in effect, acting as the public voice for the entire community, (2) in this capacity misrepresenting the community to itself and to the world at large. (The Survey Committee calls itself "the duly organized and recognized agency for public relations in the community.")

Out of this latest occurrence, delegates from forty-odd organizations in the community elected a working committee of about a dozen to discuss again the problem of community organizational life. This committee is currently functioning, although not in what might be called a violently activist atmosphere. (Remember the "x" factor.) Recently, in support of its claim of being neutral in ideological questions, the Survey Committee made a balancing statement about the disruptive character of the Council ads, but this has not had any visible ameliorative effects.

WHATEVER the various merits or demerits of the contending parties in the present situation, partisan polemic should not be allowed to obscure the Jewish concern of the Old Guard. The leadership, as such, has an earnest sense of its patrician responsibilities to the Jewish community, in which it has great pride. It wears with firm dignity the mantle of authority that has been handed down and feels that, as against "outsiders" and "newcomers," it understands the traditions and peculiar necessities of the local scene.

To say, as many do, that its component members are fearful of anti-Semitism, is to say merely that they are Jews. To say that out of this fearfulness they would not be averse to a withering away of the Jewish community as such, is simply untrue: they have spent too much time, money, and sincerity on the preservation of that community. To say that they subscribe to the "craven" theory that "Jews out of sight are Jews out of mind" is untenable: they have not followed the logic of that pattern. The Bernsteins reported of the Richmond Jews (COMMENTARY, December 1949) that "they hardly ever ran for public office, and frowned on other Jews who did. They just didn't think a Jew should put himself forward." In San Francisco they do run for office, and they do put themselves forward prominently as citizens of the city.

"The leadership," one of its spokesmen says (and rather piqued about having to say it), "has never acted out of fear or truckling. Quite on the contrary, it has always shown particular courage of conviction in following a line of thought. . . ." That line of thought is really a kind of political philosophy for special groups in an American community: they should not unnecessarily duplicate civic functions, nor intrude on the community with their internal problems, nor, for their own sake, engage in public relations activities which will unnecessarily offend the general community.

Of course, the leadership's definition of "good public relations" has always been shaded by their general political complexion, which is naturally conservative and often strongly Republican. "Mass meetings and mass pressure," they insist, "can serve no useful function in San Francisco, and can only militate against the group that uses them."

The leadership points to its successful technique in handling anti-Semitic incidents as a blueprint for proper public relations behavior: "Once we have the facts, we contact the offender in man-to-man fashion—the American way. We explain the danger of prejudice, the unfairness of indicting a whole group, the harm it can do to a free American society."

Several years ago a local radio station was broadcasting the program of a well-known anti-Semite. There was a movement afoot to prevail on all the Jewish clients of the station to cancel their advertising. The Survey Committee quelled this movement, and instead called on the proprietor of the radio station who, after discussion, canceled the contract.

"I'm canceling this program," the station owner said, "because you came to me in a decent way and presented a decent argument. Had you moved in by threatening my business, I'd have fought you all the way."

When a bus driver used offensive language, the Committee called quietly on the personnel manager; when the temples were smeared with Columbian slogans, and the culprit's membership in a local church was traced by a private detective, they approached the priest; when a real estate concern acted out a discriminatory policy, they met with the owners in conferences lasting more than a year before convincing them, in all logic, of the error of their way.

There can be no question but that this kind of diplomatic approach to anti-Semitism in-the-fact has worked effectively to date in San Francisco.

As for the internal life of the Jewish community, the leadership thinks of it largely in institutional terms and is proud of its accomplishments. Certainly, in the general, there is no look of impoverishment. The orphans' home, equipped with cottages and "mothers," is a showpiece, generously endowed. The residence home for Jewish working girls is complete with all the extra-curricular facilities that might be desired. There is a home for the aged that is described as a "veritable hotel." The Community Center is huge, thriving, and unstintingly equipped.

Critics (some of whom grew up in the East) certainly have no quarrel with these activities so far as they go—but they don't think they go far enough. They feel that the leadership (and community thinking) has been too exclusively concerned with considerations of a public relations policy, on the one hand, and of a welfare community on the other. They feel that there has been too much "local Jewish community" in the thinking and not enough Judaism. They feel that the leadership has dispatched its responsibilities as far as it's seen them, but that it has a minimal concept of a Jewish community life. Finally, many of them believe that this minimal concept, no matter how sumptuously attended, will inevitably lead to the self-annihilation of the Jewish community.

These critics point to the disparity between the tremendous sums that are generally spent on philanthropic projects and the almost negligible amounts that are allotted to such projects as Jewish education. They also deplore the paucity of activity directed towards underlining the historical mission of Judaism and the historico-mystical ties that bind Jewry to Jewry everywhere.

What they are in fact pointing up and objecting to and being frightened by, is the apparent trend of a large (and the particularly "San Franciscan") section of the community, and its leadership, to slip away from the traditional moorings of Jewish life, to loosen its Jewish roots, and in the process eventually to blur and devitalize Judaism itself.

This kind of trend, insofar as it is a by-product of Americanization, has its evidences all over the country, but nowhere else does it involve such a large portion of the Jewish population or have such a dominating influence. Nowhere has it had such a fertile field to develop in its "laboratory" form. Nowhere has it kept such clearly defined lines or been less obscured by "recent generation" leavening. Indeed, such leavening has served, more than anything else in recent years, to point up "the trend."

In defining the various segments of the Jewish community, the synagogues serve as the most convenient and the most accurate (though always approximate) focuses. Temples Emanu-El and Sherith Israel have the largest congregations in the city, a combined total of about twenty-five hundred members. They are the Reform temples, and both had their origins in the pioneer year of 1849. (There is some disagreement about which was first.)

In these congregations all the lay leaders and the famed "leadership" of the community are found (when they can be found in any congregation). Temple Emanu-El has the preponderant number of first-family and wealthy-family names in the community. Its social character has remained more stable, having acquired less of the foreign (to San Francisco) element, and fewer of the "nouveaux." Symptomatically, almost all of the local members of the American Council for Judaism are affiliated with Emanu-El, almost none with Sherith Israel. One rabbi has said: "Just as America will be the last citadel of capitalism, so Temple Emanu-El will be the last citadel of the kind of thing that Isaac M. Wise and Elka Cohen and Voorsanger stood for."

In general, the diminution of ceremonial intensity in religious life that has characterized the Jew (and the Christian) in America, is particularly noticeable in San Francisco. And there has been a general (not official) stretching of the Reform philosophy at its most radical points. Some of the city's religious leaders feel that many of those who have maintained their affiliations with the temple could very well be happy in a church of different proportions. A church that would be named, say, the American Mosaic (or Monotheistic) church where people who believed in Moses' One God could convene to make their simple devotions, renew their faith in the moral tone of life, and where their children could attend Sunday school.

"Sunday school" is, indeed, a problem. Parents who have lived apart from any formal religious affiliation all their adult life (and, of course, in San Francisco, in a "mixed" neighborhood) are suddenly faced with growing children who desire to attend the neighborhood Sunday school (Baptist or whatever) along with the other children. Parents are continually approaching their rabbi with this problem, and even where long traveling distances are involved, are anxious to have their children receive a Jewish Sunday school education. An interest in the drama of religion inevitably captures some of the children, and there is the recurrent spectacle of children demanding of flabbergasted parents that candles be lit on Friday night.

Culturally, this segment of the population has lost its basic contact with the historical language and literature of Judaism. Hebrew education is barely existent. And the European accent is, of course, completely gone. One of the more prominent members of the community tells this story: At a private affair he was attending in Los Angeles, a number of men around the table burst into strange song. "What in the world are they singing?" he asked. He was astonished to hear that they were singing Yiddish songs. That sort of thing, he said (by way of describing the temper of the city) could never have happened in San Francisco, or at least in that large part with which he was acquainted. It says a great deal that shortly after the American Council for Judaism was formed in 1943, fourteen hundred of its twenty-five hundred national members were San Franciscans. (The local membership has dwindled since.)

The rate of intermarriage is probably greater in San Francisco than any place else in the country. This is an inevitable result of the relative freedom of social movement. One old-timer named, offhand, children of five rabbis who have intermarried in the past. It is only necessary to read the social pages of the press over the months to get a comparative index. However, it is widely believed that intermarriage has passed its peak, and that the rate will not appreciably increase.

THE really significant fact about all these various aspects of Jewish life in San Francisco is by and large the naturalness and matter-of-factness of their development. They are not marked by evidences of self-hatred, Jewish anti-Semitism, fear, hysteria, or other minority neuroses. This is emphasized rather than confuted by the few cases of individuals in the community who follow the more obvious and self-betraying pattern of over-vehement and over-emotional "150 per cent Americanism." It is the normal temper of San Francisco's old-line Jews, however deviant their behavior from old Jewish patterns, to accept their Jewishness, their deviations, and their Americanism as matters of course, without conscious design, without a special sense of urgency, without schizoid complications. This is underlined by the way they go about their business, by the way they go about engaging in civic affairs, by the way they conduct their social affairs, by the way they talk about their Jewishness. However it may be elsewhere, and whatever its implications for Judaism, it is necessary to recognize that in San Francisco, by and large, the features of the Jewish community are those of an adjusted Jewry, not of a maladjusted Jewry full of jitters and tensions. To many, this "adjustment" threatens much that lies near to the heart of traditional Judaism. And there is a real problem here—the problem of best integrating the old into the new. Perhaps San Francisco does not represent the ideal integration. But who, in the glass houses of other American Jewish communities, will cast the first stone?

And it is worth remembering that so far as it concerns the majority of San Francisco's older Jewish families, the most remarkable fact of San Francisco is not the vanishing (or shrinking) Jew, but on the contrary, the insistent Jew—the Jew who insists on being a San Francisco Jew despite the historical distance (and geographical distance) from his ethnic origins, the thorough Americanization, the complete lack of ghettoization, the social mobility, the freedom of wealth, the mutations in religious thought, and the relative isolation and absence of pressures.

There are a few sensational pioneer family names that have lost their Jewish identity entirely, but they are not significant either in number or in the indication of any permanent trend. The pattern has been rather that parents, no matter how amorphous their own religious conceptions, or how distant their connections, have invariably sent their children to a Jewish Sunday school, helping them to obtain a sense, however vague, of their Jewish heritage. Families that are intermarried have, much more often than not, continued their active identification with and participation in the Jewish community. Even those who have disaffiliated, formally or effectively, from religious congregations, or are strictly "High Holiday men," insist vehemently on their Jewish identity and engage in the active leadership of the Jewish community.

This may seem strange in an area where the sentiment is strong that "Jews are members of a religion and nothing more." But one man said: "Of course I'm a Jew. I'm a Jew by religion. Is a Jew not religious because he doesn't go to temple every Friday night?" There is an overwhelming emphasis on the ethical texture, which men like this feel is unique to, and inherent in, the Jewish religion: *rachmones* or a deep-felt (not just formal or ideological) compassion for fellow men. This, along with a personal devotion to One God, they feel, is the essence of the Jewish religion, and they know they are Jews because they feel it and live by it and believe in it. It is on this level that they explain emotional generosities and philanthropies and the liberal activities so often out of character with a politically conservative cast.

It is not generally accepted in these quarters that Judaism is "religion, plus . . ." as it has sometimes been defined, that the American Jew has more of a historical identity as Jew than as American. Yet on the occasion of Israel's fight for independence and its constitution as a nation, many of San Francisco's anti-Zionists were profoundly affected, and the tone of the whole community shifted perceptibly. "What happened there," one of the old stalwarts of the American Council for Judaism said, "must affect the feelings of Jews everywhere."

Other Jews were stirred by roots they never thought they had. As a matter of fact there has been recently in the "integrated circles" an intensification of religious life, as there has been in the rest of the country. This has been reflected in temple attendance and activity. And of the recently installed rabbi at Temple Emanu-El, one of the Conservative-Orthodox rabbis in town said: "He is, if anything, a more intense Jew than I am."

THE religious structure of the Jewish community has in the past reflected the Americanized tendencies of the leadership of the older families, and the Reform temples are the most important. But there are also two fair-sized Conservative congregations in town—one of which can still understand an address in Yiddish—and a scattering of Orthodoxy. Influenced by the same historical circumstances as the older settlers, but on a smaller scale, these people generally consider themselves integrated civically and socially into San Francisco. There is little evidence of intermarriage in their ranks, but there is a tendency for them, with the accumulation of time of residence, position, and influence, to move over to Sherith Israel, the next step on the ladder to Emanu-El. And some of those who maintain their affiliation elsewhere have liked to send their children to temple Sunday school so that , as one rabbi said, "little Sarah might grow up with and catch the eye of some little San Francisco scion."

There is, community-wide, a relatively small synagogue attendance and—compared with other large cities—a relatively light preoccupation with Jewish affairs at large. (Although, again in pattern, the Welfare Fund in San Francisco has had the reputation of having a higher percentage of contributors in relation to the population than any city but Boston. In recent years, however, a number of the more wealthy donors have withheld their contributions because they felt that too much of it was going to Israel. Last year the local president of the Fund estimated that a quarter of a million dollars had been lost among large donors because of an "undercurrent of ideological differences." This tendency is diminishing.)

One member of the community seriously offered as a partial explanation of the generally limited amount of synagogue activity the fact that San Francisco had such fine weather that people weren't so disposed to go to meetings or services. But considering the climate of Palestine, or at the very least Los Angeles, it would seem that the predisposition to apathy (after all, the San Francisco "x" factor) owes less to the temperature of the air than to the tone of the community.

The vocal critics of the present leadership of San Francisco's Jewish community are centered mainly around several hundred people who feel strongly about traditional Judaism and world Jewish affairs. They aren't interested in excommunicating those whose personal Judaism has taken a different turn ("They are mostly good men. They have done fine things here. But because of their background they are out of step with Jewish life. A Jewish community cannot flourish without its traditions, its historical and cultural references . . .") so much as they are interested in making their own influence felt, sponsoring activity along more traditionally religious and more Zionist lines. They feel that a different leadership would give a different, "more specifically Jewish," complexion to the community, and this is what they hope to achieve.

The "Old Guard," for its part, is not anxious to relinquish any more of the office of leadership than it has to. It believes that it is properly restraining these newer elements whose activities might be alien to the traditions of the city and deteriorative of the good public relations they have so meticulously set up. Although they are not so articulate about their own conceptions of Judaism, it is clear that they feel that it is not they who are "out of step" but their critics, who fail to recognize that Jewish life must mean something different to third-generation American Jews from what it did to their ancestors cooped up in the ghettos of Europe and rejected by the world.

"Majority" is cried on both sides but there has been no counting of noses. (In any case, most of the noses of the community wouldn't be twitching excitedly in any direction.) At this point, "unity of expression" does not seem possible or, by any democratic standards, desirable. There is some sentiment in the committee that is sporadically working on the problem to set up a parallel body to the Survey Committee that can, whenever necessary, sponsor programs or make statements that will reflect an independent viewpoint on specific Jewish matters. It does not seem that, under the circumstances, such a body would seriously give aid to anti-Semitism in the city —if indeed that is a valid consideration at all —or that, on the other hand, it would seriously change the basic character of the local community.

WHATEVER happens on that level, it seems that in certain areas the disputants are becoming more amenable to cooperation. In 1948 the AJO held a meeting to greet Reuven Dafni, West Coast consul of Israel, and everybody came. Dafni wrote a letter to the AJO stating that he was gratified in the understanding that it was the "first time" that all the elements of San Francisco had so gathered. Recently all the groups have been working cooperatively in opposition to the Mundt-Nixon bill.

A prominent "both camps" man in town said: "Give us five or ten years more and all this bickering will have been reconciled." He is probably over-optimistic, but the gap in general is not so great as it was ten years ago. San Francisco is less isolated. No matter how neat its own back yard may be, it is no longer so easy as it once was to ignore the untidiness of the outside world, or to resist its pressures. The younger generation, in all classes, has teethed on Hitler and Israel and modern war. It is less certain of the righteousness of the *status quo;* it is more perplexed about things in general, and more consciously interested in its Jewishness in particular, than were its fathers and grandfathers.

The over-all character of San Francisco's community seems to be in for some "pendulum" change, however slight and however temporary. But come what may, the bulk of the Jews of San Francisco, neither vanished nor concerned with themselves as laboratory specimens, will merely thank the Lord that in whatever fashion they find it necessary to practice their Judaism, they are doing it in San Francisco.

CEDARS OF LEBANON

SHOLOM ALEICHEM IN SICKNESS

I HAD formed a close friendship with Sholom Aleichem during his two visits to England in the summer of 1906. Two years later in Russia, during the celebration of his silver jubilee as an author, he became ill with tuberculosis; the acute stage of his illness lasted for some weeks, and after he had recovered sufficiently he was ordered to the Italian Riviera for a complete convalescence. He went to Nervi, where he stayed during the greater part of the twelve months from November 1908 to November 1909. In order to arouse public interest in his plight and to raise a fund for his benefit, I organized a meeting at the University College, London, under the auspices of the Union of Jewish Literary Societies, where selections from his works were read and I delivered an address. A message from Israel Zangwill, who was unable to come to London, expressed the hope that Sholom Aleichem's silver jubilee would be made golden. But the meeting, which was rather poorly attended, did not yield much gold, and even after I supplemented the appeal by writing letters to the press the total amount obtained was just a little over forty pounds—a miserable tribute to a great writer. (I was under thirty at the time, otherwise I might have been a more successful *shnorer;* besides, the members of the Anglo-Jewish community in those days had not yet learned how to contribute generously to a good cause.) But Sholom Aleichem's letters were full of gratitude and good humor, just as if the remittance were ten times as large.

In all I received nineteen letters, of which four have already been published ("Sholom Aleichem in Exile," COMMENTARY, December 1949). I have since come upon the remaining fifteen, which are offered below. I have tried to translate the letters with the minimum detriment to their original flavor.—ISRAEL COHEN

Nervi, Italy
November 19, 1908

Dear friend and colleague Israel Cohen:

Your letter gave me so much pleasure that I begged the doctor to allow me to write you a few words with pen and ink, and this is for me a festive day.

Well, who is a prophet?* Sholom Aleichem! I can also prophesy to you about the evening that you are arranging. *It will prove a success,* not only morally. If I am not mistaken, I know Mr. Herman Landau well. He has a Jewish heart and is one of those rare children of the ghetto who, by his own efforts alone, became a real gentleman because he had a noble character from birth. I would be glad if Miss Helena Frank†—that kosher soul—would also be present. Dr. Rappoport,‡ whom you mention, I remember very well. He is the only one who reads Yiddish and speaks Yiddish and writes Yiddish like a Jew, because he is—*nebich*—a Lithuanian.

If I should find grace and favor in your eyes, then you won't wait until the papers print a report of the meeting some day, but you will send me a short report written in your own handwriting. Without any compliments, you write better every day. Through your writing to me, you will succeed in mastering Yiddish. And it would not be bad if the great Zangwill would show some condescension to the poor Sholom Aleichem. I would regard that as a gain, not for me personally but for our literature. London is a Kasrilevke, New York is Yehupetz, Paris is Boiberik—they should always approach one another and always convey to one another a warm and friendly

Sholom Aleichem

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* Sholom Aleichem had predicted that Israel Zangwill would not attend the public meeting in his honor, and his prediction proved correct. But Zangwill sent a cordial message of sympathy.

†Miss Frank, of Jewish origin but brought up as a Christian, was a translator of Peretz.

‡Angelo S. Rappoport, author of many works on different subjects.

November 29, 1908

Dear friend and colleague Cohen:

Your kind letter containing ten pounds I received by the first post, while still lying in bed. This is now the third day that I am feeling better, thank God. Proof of this is that I am writing to you with pen and ink. That is great progress! There are all hopes, friend Cohen, and every probability, that I shall (under tolerable conditions) become perfectly well and take up my pen anew. Never before in my life did I feel so capable of writing as now. Never before in my life were so many fine plots conceived in my brain, so many complete sketches and real pictures.

The only thing wrong is that neither the doctor nor my wife will let me write. "Eat!" they say. So I must eat. Well, we shall see who will win. . . .

Sholom Aleichem

P.S. That Mr. Landau, I believe, is a close friend of Lord Rothschild. What would it cost him to induce Rothschild to give a couple of hundred (I don't say thousand) little pounds sterling? Oh, what sort of people there are! *Ach, mentshen, mentshen!*

December 2, 1908

Dear friend and dear colleague Israel Cohen:

Scarcely had the ink on the pen with which I wrote to you about the first ten pounds become dry, when your very friendly letter with the second ten pounds reached me today. It is really a heroic achievement, in such a decadent—cold—dark—murky—gloomy—egoistic—drab city like London—to do something. And yet I hope that if you succeed in arranging a meeting in the East End you will have an even greater success. At any rate I press your hand fraternally with a very warm

Sholom Aleichem

P.S. I have forgotten the main thing. I am glad to inform you that I am getting on well, not only from day to day but from hour to hour. In one week I put on three pounds—that is, for a being like myself, more than enough. There is a little unpleasantness only from a cough, which goes on coughing. But even that must sink into the depths of the sea, as it stands plainly written in the prayer book, in *tashlich*. And then I shall become a Goliath the Philistine, a Samson the mighty one, supported by a Lord Rothschild.

Thank you for the papers and for conveying greetings to that pious one of the Gentiles, whose seat is prepared in Paradise over one hundred and twenty years, I feel sure not far from Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah. You must understand yourself that I mean Miss Helena Frank. I have received a letter from her with a lot of Hebrew words, over which an English reverend would certainly have to sweat. Does she not perhaps embody the transmigrated soul of Mother Rachel? Hannah? or Queen Esther? or Abigail? A noble tender Jewish soul in a Christian body! Give her greetings from me. I have also written to her.

I am still waiting to hear good news from you. Can't you let me know how you are? Where do you write and what are you writing?—In America as well as in Russia literary evenings are being arranged for the Chanukah days.

December 20, 1908

Best friend and colleague Israel Cohen:

I have received with thanks your dear and esteemed letter with the check for 329 lira, and I am fulfilling your wish that I should get better. Yesterday evening I sent a telegram of congratulations to Dr. Rappoport in Paris on the occasion of his marriage, and have also written him a letter. It is a pity you haven't sent me the *Jewish World* in which Mr. Lurie writes about his visit to Nervi.

Tell Miss Carmel Goldsmid* that I was in love with her. Her eyes pursued me for a long time. It is fortunate that I have a wife and she probably has a fiancé. So the world goes on as it is.

And last of all is the dearest—I mean the son of the London Chief Rabbi, Mr. Adler. I, the little Sholom Aleichem, did not have the honor to see the great Chief Rabbi, Dr. Adler. The people around the great rabbi did not let me get near him. My visiting card was also of no avail. And it was just on the eve of the Day of Atonement, when a rabbi and a leader in Israel is obliged to receive everybody with a friendly welcome, and particularly a stranger ("And ye shall love the stranger, for ye were strangers in Egypt"), especially as I informed the secretary and, I believe, wrote on the card that I only wanted to make the personal acquaintance of the Chief Rabbi of England. There is a proverb: To have been in Rome and not seen the Pope. May God forgive him—He is a pardoner of sins, not I. My prediction regarding your Hebrew has been fulfilled—that is shown by your signature.

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*The younger daughter of Colonel Albert Goldsmid, who had been head of the Hovevei Zion Association in England and a member of the Zionist expedition to El Arish.

Yours forever,
Sholom Aleichem

January 14, 1909

Dear friend Israel Cohen:

It is now so long since I have written to you that I am afraid you have meanwhile made such progress in Yiddish that one must now write to you in Hebrew. Today I again had a visit from Mr. S. Lurie (of the *Daily Mail*) with his two daughters. He no longer found me in bed, but at my desk. With regard to my health, I can tell you that I am well. Would that I do not become any worse, that is, better—then it will be all right. The celebration of my (semi-) jubilee is not finished yet. America is now on the list. From my town in Russia—Kiev—I have received news that my friends intend raising a fund (they have already deposited part of it) and want to buy me a villa (a little house with a garden) in Palestine, because the doctors say that I must spend the next winter also in a warm climate on the seacoast. As soon as this news is definite, I shall write to you.

I am now writing a whole series of new tales, short and humorous, under a general title, "Railway Stories." They will be printed at the same time in Yiddish, Russian, and German. It would be good if they could also appear in English, that is real English, I mean in some *goyish* magazine or a *goyish* paper. The stories are, first, short; second, quite original, and would be very suitable for the English public because they are not specifically Jewish.

Write and let me know how you are, if you have time to write. And if not, keep well just the same is the wish of your friend

Sholom Aleichem

January 24, 1909

My dear friend, Mr. Israel Cohen:

Again a stiff envelope with a soft letter (97.50 lira), and I thought you had already long forgotten me. I thank you for informing me of your new address and wish your former landlady a complete recovery. I shall write you short letters from time to time about my health. With us in Nervi it is now summer. This week I again put on another two pounds. In a few days' time you will receive my photograph. A neighbor of mine has photographed me about twenty times, and only at the twenty-first time did I come out satisfactorily, he said. I am now writing many new things, and some admirers of my old things—*goyim*—have now turned up who want to publish a couple of volumes in Russian. We are now conducting negotiations. The Warsaw Committee for my jubilee are making me a handsome present: they are buying back the rights of all my works from three publishers for the sake of my honor. This is a present worth a nice few thousand rubles.

Write good letters.

Your most devoted friend,
Sholom Aleichem

March 6, 1909

Dear friend and colleague Israel Cohen:

My American colleagues in New York have presented me—may their hands never ache—on the occasion of my literary jubilee, with a typewriter, so I am no longer writing with a pen. And this is the best thing I could wish for in the interest of my health.

How are you, dear friend? Where is it written that Israel Cohen must send Sholom Aleichem only letters with money?

I am sending you at the same time my new story, which will be published in the Yiddish press in Russia for Passover. Read it through carefully first, and if you should find that it can have an interest also for an English Jew, then I would beg you that you should take the trouble to translate it into English and get it published in a journal (*Jewish Chronicle, Jewish World,* or altogether in a *goyish* magazine). If you are able to make any money by it, then you will first deduct something for translation and the rest you will send to me—for the four cups of wine on Passover. But if you should find that it is unsuitable for England, then please return it to me at once. In any case answer me quickly and straightaway.

Your most devoted and faithful friend,
Sholom Aleichem

N.B. Don't sell the story at any price to a

Yiddish paper! And in the case of an Anglo-Jewish (or English) paper, please see that it is not printed before Passover.

March 19, 1909

Dear friend Israel Cohen:

Since you are so quick that you read quickly, judge quickly, and return quickly, I am sending you a second sketch of mine in honor of Passover, with the title "A Page of the Song of Songs," hoping that this won't occupy you long, because, in the first place, it is quite short, and secondly, it has a relation to the Bible, to the Song of Songs. And that which has to do with the Bible, and indeed still more with the Song of Songs, your English people, it seems, particularly like.

So, dear friend, if you are able to do anything with it, you will doubtless do something, "according to the good hand of God upon thee." As a last resort we have a *Jewish Chronicle* or a *Jewish World*. But if the "Song of Songs" is not for them, then I beg you to be the same quick friend, Israel Cohen, and return it to me.

And may you have a happy and kosher Passover, according to the wish of

Your friend,

Sholom Aleichem

P.S. When are you going to send me your new book?

April 16, 1909

Dear friend and colleague Israel Cohen:

It is true that there is an evil star in heaven, but not yours, only mine. I'm afraid to send you anything more, in case some sort of accident again happens. And perhaps my work simply doesn't please you, and you are reluctant to write me the plain truth because I am an invalid. . . . Now confess, it doesn't matter, I shan't become more sick than sick. I am still not all right, dear Cohen, I am still short of much, very much, to be all right. I only hope that I shall yet gain as much as I am short of. How much time I shall yet spend here, I don't know myself: in any case, weeks. In May the doctors are sending me to some place in Germany, Switzerland, or the Tyrol (Austria), in some forest or other. That is what they want—that is, the doctors. And one must obey them! Perhaps, dear friend, you know a sort of remedy for doctors? . . . The "Page of the Song of Songs" that you sent me has not reached me. Have you received some things of mine these days from various editors' offices? Do you sometimes see Miss Helena Frank?

I am writing new things now also, for Lag Ba-Omer, for Shevuoth, and just simple stories. The festival stories are not for translation. Perhaps my "Railway Stories" will meet with more luck, or perhaps—tell me now the real truth, don't be ashamed. Where is it written that all Jewish stories must be suitable for *goyim?* For me to be humiliated by this would be a great stupidity on my part. What say you? . . . On the whole, I'm befuddling your head. Forgive me, but still write me a few words some time. I wish you luck in all your undertakings and, above all, health. Yes, health! . . .

Sholom Aleichem

Sanatorium St. Blasien
Schwarzwald, Germany
July 31, 1909

Dear friend and colleague:

Your letter that reached me here today seemed as though it had fallen from heaven. It was sent on to me from Montreux, and in *loshen kodesh* [Hebrew] in the bargain. One could almost die laughing! Now this confirms the Hebrew saying: "There is nothing that can resist the will." You are doing it better than Zangwill. Zangwill is seeking and seeking for a territory, but there is no territory.* If only he had employed the time to better advantage and acquired a knowledge of Yiddish and Hebrew like you, he wouldn't have a bellyache from the Jews.

How am I? I've been in Switzerland and suffered quite a lot, got over my illness in Italy, and now I am, as you will see on the other side of this postcard, in a sanatorium, and hope to God that I shall find here the real perfect cure. And as the main treatment here consists only in lying—*hashkivenu*† is what it is called in Hebrew—that is why I have enough time not only to suffer but also to write. So I am writing as much as possible. I have arranged for the new Warsaw daily (*Die Neie Velt*) to be forwarded to your old address. When you get it, you can at once begin to read a whole series of my new sketches entitled "Railway Stories." These will, I hope, make a bit of a stir in the literary world. They are already being translated into Russian for Gorki's publication. There will probably be some enthusiasts for rendering them into German. But my heart is always inclined towards English. Perhaps you will read them through, and in case you should be seized by the desire, then *you* would translate them (or some of them)? Write to me whether you receive the above-mentioned paper, and also how are you? With what are you always so busy? Are you romancing with girls? Or perhaps—a question about Israel Cohen—have you set yourself to study the Talmud?

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* A reference to Zangwill's activities as a "territorialist" seeking some area (outside of Palestine) for Jewish settlement.

† "Cause us to lie down," the beginning of a paragraph in the evening prayer.

I await your dear letters.

Sholom Aleichem

August 9, 1909

My dear friend and colleague:

I have received the draft from the *Jewish Chronicle* for the money from South Africa, and am naturally very grateful. Perhaps you would be so good as to find out by writing a letter to the *Chronicle* who are the people who sent the money?—the town, the people, etc.? No news for the present.

Sholom Aleichem

Regina Hotel
Lugano, Switzerland
September 27, 1909

Dear friend Israel Cohen:

You have guessed right, but not altogether. I have indeed left the Sanatorium St. Blasien, but am not yet well. The doctors (may they burn!) are sending me once again to Nervi for the winter. But because it is still hot there as in a bath, I am meanwhile languishing here in Lugano, near the frontier between Switzerland and Italy, and I plan to agonize here for not more than a month, and then, God willing, straight to Nervi.

I thank you for your book in advance, and wish you a happy New Year. I would like to know whether you receive *Die Neie Velt* from Warsaw, for which I have subscribed for you. Another thing: what news about Miss Helena Frank? Where is she now and how is she?

Your loving friend,
Sholom Aleichem

Nervi, Italy
November 3, 1909

Dear friend Israel Cohen:

It has not yet happened that a letter of yours hasn't been like the fulfilment of a wish. That's how it was a year ago with the little stiff registered packets, and that is how it is with your letter which has reached me on the first day of my settling down for a winter cure in the ever young Nervi. I think that Dr. Cook could not have been so surprised at the North Pole when he greeted an American Yankee on the eternal snows, as I was by your "Sholom Aleichem," the first greeting to me in Italy this season. I await your book. I am intensely miserable!

Sholom Aleichem

November 10, 1909

Dear friend and colleague:

I have received another letter from you (of the same date), and I answered you at once. I am now writing to you at length. I was in a state known as *smohl*. What does this mean? *Smohl* means: *Pah!* Do you know now? My people got quite frightened (there are such naive people who are afraid of death . . .) and soon packed me off here, to Nervi, and acted quite quickly. I already feel better here, and there is a hope in God that I shall have the possibility of passing the whole winter here without any cares. I only wish that, God willing, I become a man again. Probably God will help, it will be all right. Meanwhile I am writing still lying on my back. That is the custom here.

I have been expecting your book so long. It seems that in your country they print just like among us in Kasrilevke—with oxen!

Sholom Aleichem

November 19, 1909

Dearly beloved friend Israel Cohen:

It's a long time now since I had a letter from you. I am simply longing for one. I am getting better and better. There are even times when I suffer a little. Well, that is why one is in Italy. If one should really not have any pains at all, one could—Heaven forbid!—forget about God. How are you?

In America they are only now celebrating my silver jubilee: in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore, Cleveland, St. Louis, Montreal, Denver, Buenos Aires.

Sholom Aleichem

ON THE HORIZON

WILLIAM FAULKNER: AN AMERICAN DICKENS

LESLIE A. FIEDLER

NO ONE can write about William Faulkner without committing himself to the weary task of trying to disengage the author and his work from the misconceptions that surround them. It has taken me ten years of wary reading to distinguish the actual writer of *The Sound and the Fury* from a synthetic Faulkner, compounded of sub-Marxian stereotypes (Negro-hater, nostalgic and pessimistic proto-fascist, etc.); and I am aware that there is yet another pseudo-Faulkner, derived mostly from the potboiling *Sanctuary,* a more elaborate and chaotic Erskine Caldwell, revealing a world of barnyard sex and violence through a fog of highbrow rhetoric. The grain of regrettable truth in both these views is lost in their misleading emphases; and equally confusing are the less hysterical academic partial glimpses which make Faulkner primarily a historian of Southern culture, or a canny technician whose evocations of terror are secondary to Jamesian experiments with "point of view." Faulkner, also distorting Faulkner, once told a class of young writers that he never considers form at all! I am moved by the newest collection of Faulkner's short stories (*Collected Stories of William Faulkner,* Random House, 900 pp., $4.00) to propose another partial view as a counterweight to the others.

There have been in the last weeks predictions from various quarters that Faulkner, now that his latest novel was chosen by the Book of the Month Club, will shortly win a wider audience. But he has been, though the fact has been astonishingly overlooked, for nearly twenty years the most widely read American writer of whom any respectable critic has been tempted to use the word "great."

In Dixon Wecter's recent history of American life during the years of the Great Depression, the name of Faulkner is not even mentioned; yet in the years covered by Mr. Wecter's book, Faulkner published not only his two greatest novels, but also some sixty stories, nearly twenty of them in the *Saturday Evening Post,* which is, I suppose, the magazine most likely to be picked up by the common man when he has seen all the movies in town. One must make certain qualifications, of course; neither *The Sound and the Fury* nor *Light in August,* his most eminent novels, have had a wide sale. But as a short story writer, he has sold consistently to the mass circulation magazines, apparently pleasing the widest of our reading publics.

It is a strange experience for those of us to whom Faulkner's name is associated with the critical journals in which his fiction almost never appears, to find his stories, dressed up with the obvious pictures of the weekly family magazine, flanked not by a Kafka or Joyce, but by the dismal hacks whose names I cannot even now (though I have just looked) remember. Sometimes Faulkner writes for *Harper's,* but never for anything even as pretentious as the *New Yorker.* The only "little magazine" which has printed any of the present stories is *Sewanee Review,* in which first appeared the charming but utterly slick "A Courtship."

If Faulkner's stories were the work of his left hand, their appearance in popular maga-

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zines would be of little consequence (a man has to live!), but Faulkner is essentially a short story writer. He has no special talent for sustained narrative, though twice he has brought off a *tour de force* in long fiction. The forty-three stories in the present collection are by no means his total achievement. In it are included most of the stories from two earlier collections now out of print, *These Thirteen* and *Dr. Martino;* but the seven stories of *Go Down Moses* are not included, nor those loosely worked together in *The Unvanquished,* nor the four magazine tales woven into the text of *The Hamlet,* nor the Gavin Stevens detective stories (*Saturday Evening Post* favorites) which were gathered together last year in a pseudo-long narrative called *Knight's Gambit.*

FAULKNER as a storyteller is apparently short-breathed by nature, and his years of writing for the stringent space limits of the magazines has confirmed his tendency to write in gasps. What look like novels at first glimpse, *The Hamlet* or *The Unvanquished,* for instance, come apart into loosely linked short narratives; *Light in August* achieves substance by intertwining two separate stories, and *Sanctuary,* slim enough in finished form, consists of various sub-plots out of the Sartoris-Snopes background, tacked onto the original money-making shocker. Only in *Absalom, Absalom!* and *The Sound and the Fury* has Faulkner worked out genuine full-length narratives by extension rather than patchwork; and even in these two books, he attains novelistic thickness not by inventing a long, complex fable, but by revealing in a series of strict "point of view" accounts of the same experience the amount of narrative material proper to a short story. It is this experiment with "point of view," a virtue made of a short-breathed necessity, that has concealed somewhat the essentially popular nature of Faulkner's work, and has suggested to his critics comparisons with Proust or Joyce or James, rather than Dickens, whom he so strikingly resembles. The inventor of Popeye and the creator of Quilp have a great deal in common besides an obsession with the grotesque, and especially they have a demonic richness of invention (typified by their equal skill at evoking names that are already myths before the characters are drawn) and a contempt for the platitudes of everyday experience.

Like Dickens, Faulkner is primarily, despite his intellectual *obiter dicta,* a sentimental writer; not a writer with the occasional vice of sentimentality, but one whose basic mode of experience is sentimental, in an age when the serious "alienated" writer emblazons anti-sentimentality on his coat of arms. In a writer whose very method is self-indulgence, that sentimentality becomes sometimes downright embarrassing, as in the stories of World War II in the present collection, "Tall Men," "Two Soldiers," etc., in which the soupiest clichés of self-sacrifice and endurance are shamelessly worked; he is not above the crassest "happy endings," stage-managing creakily the fulfillments that we had hoped for against all logic and probability. Even in so good a story as "Uncle Willy" the subtlety of tone and the ingenuity of development serve the conventional soft tale of the town lush opposed to the embattled forces of spinsterhood in a struggle for the old man's life and a boy's soul. Since Romanticism, the reservoir of the sentimental has been nostalgia, and in popular American literature this reservoir has been preeminently the nostalgia for boyhood and for our only homegrown Middle Ages, the ante-bellum South. The South conquered the popular imagination at the moment of its defeat, and the number of synthetic latter-day supporters of the Confederacy is exceeded among us only by the synthetic rooters for Notre Dame. When the bloody corn cobs are brushed aside, we can see there is a large area of popular commitment which Faulkner shares with the author of *Gone With the Wind.*

FAULKNER is a Rousseauist at a time when scarcely a serious writer has not found a way to mock the Noble Savage. Recently, in a general recantation of his earlier bitterness, he has been telling us that all men are good, that is, better than their circumstances would lead us to expect. And the best men in Faulkner are small boys, peasants, Indians, and Negroes. The American extension of Rousseauism through James Fenimore Cooper leads directly to William Faulkner. The great unpopular novels of the 20th century are urban, cosmopolite, but his writing has been non-urban, even anti-urban, as has the popular sub-literature produced largely for city-dwellers from fashionable suburbs. Faulkner is, without doubt, the last serious writer in the United States to attempt Noble Savage Indian stories ("The Courtship," "Lo!"), as well as tales of hunting, fishing, horsemanship, and aviation—stunt and combat flying, to be sure—where the matter-of-fact machine is triumphed over, as the plod and pull of the horse is romantically sublimated in jumping. What other novelist of first rank can write so directly to the average American?

The subject matter *par excellence* of the modern novel, the alienation of the artist, and the hero *par excellence*, a Dedalus wandering the city in the vain hope of embracing his father, the citizen, are alien to Faulkner. He has only one story and one early novel in which the artist is protagonist; and this, too, is fortunate for Faulkner. The occasional "intellectual" whom he uses for a mouthpiece, Ratliffe, the sewing machine salesman, or Gavin Stevens, is an intellectual who can mingle unnoticed with the boys on the front porch, wearing the Phi Beta Kappa key which no one recognizes. This is Faulkner's sentimentalized image of himself, not even the writer but the peddler or the lawyer, accepted and admired by the whole people, for whom he adjusts his grammar and to whom he reveals the truth of their plight, not as a prophet but as a detective—the poor man's intellectual.

THE detective story is the inevitable crown of Faulkner's work; in it (the six stories in *Knight's Gambit* and *Intruder in the Dust*) many strains of writing find fulfillment, not least his concern with the "switcheroo" and the surprise ending. Such devices are generally regarded these days as old-fashioned and factitious, but Faulkner has always shared with the mass public a sneaking fondness for them. "A Rose for Emily," in some ways the best of his short stories, is marred by the last-minute use of such machinery, and many of his other pieces good or bad ("Hair," "A Courtship") employ that disreputable device, presumed to have died with O. Henry. In the sub-literature of the detective novel the "switcheroo" has not only survived, but has become its very point; and it is therefore inevitable that Faulkner turn more and more to that form, as, indeed, Dickens was doing at the end of his career.

The final likeness of Dickens and Faulkner has been almost obliterated by opposite distortions; we are inclined to believe, if we accept the stereotypes, that the grotesque in Dickens is almost exclusively comic, while the same element in Faulkner is invariably horrible. But Dickens has won increasing recognition as a sober exploiter of irrational evil, and attempts have been made to establish Faulkner as a humorist. There are various kinds of humor in Faulkner, the most common "pure" form being the bargaining story, with the climax of the trickster tricked. But precisely as in Dickens, there is no clear line between the horrible and the funny; it is all what we would call in our newest vocabulary "the absurd." The cast of most of Faulkner's humorous stories is drawn from the Snopeses, the perpetrators of his most revolting horrors. One of the best stories in the present collection, "Barn Burning," is a tale of unrelieved horror told through the eyes of a boy watching his father, the aboriginal Ab Snopes; and from the seed of that story is developed a large part of *The Hamlet,* which begins in terror and passes through the affair of the idiot and the cow to an ambivalent climax of horse-trading and treasure-hunting, by turns simply funny and absolutely horrible; and the final generation of Snopeses appears in the midst of Popeye's impotent ravages in *Sanctuary,* as two purely burlesque cornballs, mistaking a brothel for a hotel. The art of the grotesque, whether comical or horrible, has always a popular appeal, impelling each character toward becoming his own archetype, and thus making possible the playing out of moral conflicts as melodrama or farce.

There are, of course, obstacles between Faulkner and complete popular acceptance. His monstrously involved "point of view" is a lion in the path, but it poses a problem in only three or four of his eighteen books, and is not troublesome at all in the short stories. Then, there is his prose style, whose sheer pretentious ineptitude often puts off all readers, popular or highbrow; but the pseudo-poetry of the author of bad verse is rather an attraction really for the common reader with his dim sense of rhetoric as desirable. If it were only easier to skip in Faulkner! It is necessary in simple self-defense; but his connecting links are so often lost within the double-parentheses of precisely the most unreadable passages, that one skips only at the price of confusion.

In general, the subject matter of Faulkner is congenial to popular taste, but he suffers in two respects, by an omission and an emphasis. His concern with sex at its most lurid, his monotonously nymphomaniac women, his lovers of beasts, his rapists and dreamers of incest, put off the ordinary reader, who tends to prefer his pornography pure. The average reader is no prude about sex, he merely insists that it be kept in its place, that is, in trash and not in literature, demanding a distinction much like that between the harlot and the honest woman he marries.

More important, I think, is Faulkner's avoidance of young love, his almost hysterical campaign against the myth of the pure young girl, which joins him to most post-Flaubertian serious novelists, but cuts him off from the providers of popular entertainment. The purest passionate relations in Faulkner are between men in love with the same woman, who is usually quite unworthy of either; the tenderest feeling he evokes (barring the almost sickly-sweet idyll of Ike and the cow) are between brother and sister, or a boy and an old man, whether a white hophead, an Indian hunter, or a proud Negro. Even in *Knight's Gambit,* the most syrupy of Faulkner's works, he cannot quite bring himself to redeem the *ingénue* for love, but saves the final clinch for a middle-aged pair, to whom a nineteen-year-old boy says at the curtain, "Bless you my children!"

But American literature, popular and serious, has a counter-tradition to the boy-girl-marriage routine, a pair of juvenile, subsexual myths of love, perhaps even more deeply rooted in our land: unconsummated brother-sister incest (from the very first American novel through Hawthorne, Poe, and Melville to a recent successful movie, *Miss Tatlock's Millions*), and the platonic passion of white boy and colored man, the dream of a love stronger than our strongest guilt (most splendidly expressed in *Huckleberry Finn*) that reaches a climax in *Go Down Moses* and *Intruder in the Dust.*

That Faulkner is an uneven writer everyone knows; but the good and bad in his work cannot be equated with the popular and highbrow elements. The two distinctions cut through his achievement on different planes; he is neither a natural storyteller confusing his talent with forays into the "literary," nor a great artist prostituting his talents for a living. His successes and failures are alike rooted in each level; and, indeed, he is often a "bad" writer, both by purely slick standards and in light of the higher criticism.

Why he is such a super-eminently good "bad" writer, surmounting excesses of maudlin feeling and absurd indulgences in over-ripe rhetoric alike, is a mystery. We can only cite the astonishing richness of invention and specification, the ability to realize characters and tensions with a power to coerce our credence that has nothing to do with a resemblance to "real" life or the technical standards we had fondly supposed would be demanded of any first-rate fiction in our time. It is only the just and delightful final turn of the screw that so baffling a writer has pleased over twenty-five years two audiences, each unaware of the fact, much less the grounds, of the other's appreciation.

THE STUDY OF MAN

TWO SOCIAL SCIENTISTS VIEW "NO WAY OUT"

The Unconscious Vs. the "Message" in an Anti-Bias Film

MARTHA WOLFENSTEIN AND NATHAN LEITES

NO WAY OUT, the latest film on race prejudice, revolves around the difficulties of a young Negro interne in a county hospital of a large Northern city. On his first assignment to the prison ward, he is called upon to treat a hoodlum who has been wounded in the leg during a robbery. Led by various signs to suspect a brain tumor, the doctor performs a spinal puncture. The patient dies immediately, while his brother, also wounded and handcuffed to the adjoining bed, screams: That nigger killed my brother! The doctor wishes to have an autopsy to prove that his diagnosis and treatment were correct. But permission must be obtained from the surviving brother, the Negro-hater, who has gruesome fantasies about what they would do to his brother's body, and refuses. He gets word to his friends that his brother has been "murdered" by a Negro, and they plan to avenge the "murder" by a race riot. The Negro community is forewarned and by a well-organized strategy surprises and beats its white enemies, but without the participation of the Negro doctor, who disapproves of resorting to violence. The doctor forces the issue of the autopsy by "confessing" to the "murder" of his patient. The autopsy exonerates him. The hoodlum, to whom the physician who has performed the autopsy gives an explanation of his brother's death, remains unconvinced: That's medical double-talk—I tell you I saw him kill my brother. The hoodlum escapes, lays a trap for the Negro doctor, and is about to murder him when he is stopped at the last moment.

The makers of the film have tried in various ways to present Negroes favorably (though without exaggerated nobility) and their detractors unfavorably. The Negro hero belongs to one of the most respected professions and is shown to be competent in its practice; throughout the film he demonstrates a high standard of character: he is intelligent, unassuming, industrious, a good doctor, a good son, a good husband. The Negro-baiter, on the other hand, is presented as a psychopathic criminal of the lowest status (the part is played by Richard Widmark, one of Hollywood's most "detestable" villains). And, to reinforce the figure of the hero, there is a white doctor, an embodiment of respectability, calm courage, reason, and responsibility, who helps the Negro in his fight for vindication. On the *conscious* level—the level of argument—it is likely that any but violent Negro-haters will be moved by this film in the

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No Way Out is perhaps the most ambitious of the growing list of films designed to combat anti-Negro prejudice. All, like those about anti-Semitism, have aroused debate as to their effectiveness by critics, social psychologists, movie-makers, and experts in intergroup relations. Here Nathan Leites and Martha Wolfenstein, the authors of *Movies: A Psychological Study,* published this year by the Free Press (Glencoe, Illinois), give their views of *No Way Out,* and in the process demonstrate some of the pitfalls and complexities that face the producers of films intended to reshape racist attitudes. Mr. Leites, who holds his Ph.D. degree from the University of Fribourg, has done important research in the field of propaganda. He now teaches at Yale. Miss Wolfenstein holds her Ph.D. degree from Radcliffe College and she is now assistant professor at the Child Development Center at Yale University.

direction that the film-makers desire them to go—though to what extent is always a question. *No Way Out* has been endorsed by many Negro and white leaders in the fight against prejudice, and some film reviewers have praised it as the most courageous and honest of the cycle of films about Negroes.

HOWEVER, if we analyze the film in more detail, certain negative elements begin to appear that might well counteract, *on a deeper level,* the good intentions of the movie-makers. An examination of the negative side of this film should be useful for our understanding not only of prejudice itself but also of the combination of factors that goes into the formation of films and other products of our popular culture.

In the death of the patient under treatment by the Negro doctor, we are shown one thing and told another. While the verbal explanation (which the surviving hoodlum calls "medical double-talk") indicates that the Negro doctor is innocent, what we see tends to create an opposite impression. We are shown that the doctor is unsure of himself. He has come to the prison ward for the first time; the guards do not know him, are uncertain whether he should be there, and increasingly puzzled at the seemingly irrelevant instruments he requires for what everyone supposes to be a simple leg wound. Moreover, the doctor is already visibly shaken by the insults of the patient's brother. What we see is that an inexperienced, insecure Negro doctor, whose procedure looks dubious to everyone present, treats a man with a seemingly minor injury in such a way that he immediately dies.

This device of showing one thing and telling another is a recurrent one in American films. Thus, to cite a frequent instance, a beautiful girl appears to be sexually promiscuous, but eventually an explanation is given which proves her behavior to have been virtuous. What we were shown, though proved to be a false appearance, has nevertheless made its emotional impact: the final explanation satisfies our conscience and enables us to enjoy forbidden fantasies without feeling guilty. Similarly, in *No Way Out,* what we see confirms the fantasy of the Negro as a killer, and the emotional impact of this may remain though it is explained away as a false appearance. The doctor's eventual "confession" to the "murder" further aggravates this ambiguous effect: for a moment we are apt to suppose that he believes himself guilty, that under the unnerving Negro-baiting of the patient's brother he actually committed a fatal blunder. We are soon given to understand that his confession is only a ruse to force the autopsy, but the other impression has already been made and will probably not be entirely obliterated.

Likewise, the sequence of the race riot contains images which tend to confirm the fantasy of the Negro as a dangerous attacker. We know that the Negroes in stealing a march on the white gang who are preparing to attack them are acting in justified self-defense. But at the moment when the Negroes rush in, we see standing beside the brutal bully who has been organizing the white gang a clean-cut young girl who does not appear before or after in the film. And as the fight begins, there is a close-up of another white girl, who also has no other part in the film, screaming in anguish. These two images would seem very likely to evoke the fantasy of "white womanhood" assaulted by the "bestial Negroes."

Again, though the Negroes' victory over their attackers is one of the most positive actions of the film, it is also a case of "preventive war." Foreseeing an assault against themselves, the Negroes take the initiative in opening hostilities. Presumably many Americans doubt the moral legitimacy of such behavior. If the whites had been shown striking the first blow, the position of the Negroes would probably have seemed stronger.

THE central issue about the autopsy presents us with the following alternative: in order to save a Negro, a white corpse must be "violated." (The brother of the dead man richly evokes the horrors of cutting up the body.) The posing of this alternative is the more impressive if we recall that much the same issue was presented in *Intruder in the Dust* and in *Home of the Brave.* In *Intruder in the Dust,* the body of a white man, supposedly murdered by a Negro, must be dug up out of consecrated ground in order to establish the Negro's innocence; we are made vividly aware of how terrible this sacrilege seems to the father and brothers of the dead man, but to save the Negro it is necessary to set aside the white men's feelings. In *Home of the Brave,* at the moment when the reconnoitering party is leaving the island before the oncoming Japanese, one of the white soldiers dies of wounds; all believe that if his body falls into the hands of the enemy it will be mutilated, and the men are about to carry their dead comrade away with them when the Negro soldier succumbs to a hysterical paralysis and they must carry him instead.

What is the meaning of this reiterated fantasy in which to save a Negro a gruesome sacrifice must be made? We would suggest that it may be connected with the idea of lynching, when the Negro's body both before and after death is made the target for otherwise impermissible sadistic acts. The films seem to express a kind of inversion of the lynching theme: if the Negro is saved (not lynched, not mutilated, etc.), then the pent-up sadistic impulses will recoil against the white man; if the Negro is not the victim, then the white man will have to be the victim in his place. Towards the end of *No Way Out*, after the autopsy, when the hoodlum remains unreconciled, the white doctor reassures the Negro: You've convinced everyone in this town except one madman. He then turns to the hoodlum: Maybe an autopsy on you would show what's the matter with your brain. This confirms the significance of the autopsy as a punitive threat. (Earlier the hoodlum had threatened the Negro doctor that his gang would perform an "autopsy" on him.)

THE Negro doctor in *No Way Out* is in a position corresponding to that of the hero in many American film melodramas: he is falsely accused. But where the typical white hero meets his difficulties self-reliantly and fights alone for safety, the Negro is here dependent on others to fight his battles. He is shown as extremely dependent on the white doctor who is his superior in the hospital, and who makes strenuous efforts on his behalf to arrange for the autopsy which will clear him. In the end, when the Negro is about to be shot by the hoodlum, it is a girl, whose sympathies have been won over by the white doctor, who saves him. Even in his forcing of the autopsy, the Negro's behavior is markedly different from that of the usual film hero: his false "confession" suggests that his only weapon is self-abasement, an outdoing of his detractors.

Contrasted with the Negro doctor is another Negro, who has not tried to improve his social and professional position, but works as an elevator operator in the hospital. This man has all the toughness, resolve, and self-reliance which the doctor seems to have lost in the course of his self-betterment. When the news comes that the white gang is going to raid "Nigger Town," it is the elevator man who organizes the successful surprise attack, while the doctor is shown at the last minute futilely telephoning an alderman to ask him to do something about the threatened riot. Thus the two major Negro protagonists have contrary shortcomings from the point of view of American ideals: one is over-aggressive and dangerous; the other is under-aggressive, a personification of the victim; neither seems to fit into American concepts of normal self-reliance, though presumably one of the purposes of the film is to "normalize" the audience's image of the Negro.

In effect, the Negro doctor has withdrawn from the struggle of the Negroes and in his efforts to better himself has become a burden on well-disposed whites such as his superior in the hospital; he embodies a moral demand, all the more pressing because of his own high moral character. In a similar way, the Negro protagonist in *Intruder in the Dust*, though a more heroic figure, also by refusing to keep to his "place" becomes a burden to his white well-wishers, who must exert themselves to get him out of the difficulties in which he has become involved. The Negro soldier in *Home of the Brave* is a burden in a more literal sense when he becomes paralyzed and must be carried on the backs of his white comrades as they escape from the enemy; and here too the Negro is "out of place," having been reluctantly included in the group only because of a shortage of personnel.

Some may argue, of course, that this "burdensomeness" of the Negro is, rather, a clear moral obligation: since the disabilities of Negroes are laid upon them by white society, it is incumbent on the whites to remedy the situation, and a film directed at white audiences should therefore emphasize this. But the sense of obligation and guilt often produces an increased hostility to the victim. The problem of how to state the moral case without risking such a "boomerang" reaction is of course involved in most efforts to cure prejudice.

The theme of betrayal occurs in *No Way Out* as it did in *Crossfire,* one of the films on anti-Semitism. A character is presented who is subject to conflicting loyalties and who, in order to side against prejudice, must betray an old attachment. In *Crossfire* it was the young soldier who was prevailed on to betray his buddy who had murdered the Jew. *No Way Out* presents a girl who has been intimately involved with the two hoodlums but is struggling to free herself from the degrading social conditions of her origin. She is the former wife of the man who dies, and has been the mistress of the surviving brother. The white doctor and the Negro doctor come to see her in an effort to engage her help in getting permission for the autopsy. Though temporarily diverted by her former lover (it is she who carries the message that precipitates the race riot), she eventually turns against him, and in the end saves the Negro's life. Though she is presented as noble in her conversion, we also know that she has a record of betraying one man for another. The coarse accusations of her former lover for her desertion to the Negro are thus to some extent convincing.

This girl is also used as the focus of another theme: social advancement. *No Way Out* shows anti-Negro feelings as peculiar to semicriminal elements in a slum area, and most intensely concentrated in one pathological individual. The girl in seeking to rise above her origins must cast off the anti-social attitudes of the slum and identify herself with the respectable and decent people; decent people are not prejudiced against Negroes; therefore she must get rid of her prejudice. For some audiences, this appeal may be an effective one. But, again, it is not without danger. Race prejudice in its most violent forms is apt to occur among just those whose desire for social advancement has been frustrated; for such people, the argument that lack of prejudice is "respectable" may be only irritating.

The picture of the Negro doctor's home life contains further images that may have an unintended negative effect. He and his mother, wife, sister, and brother-in-law are shown at table eating heartily. In American films, serious positive characters are rarely shown eating: they drink a good deal, and sometimes are shown preparing food, but rarely consuming it; if they start to eat, they are apt to be interrupted by something more important. Negative (or comic) characters, on the other hand, may be shown eating at greater length and with more absorption. That the Negro family in *No Way Out* is shown preoccupied with eating confirms the conventional image of Negroes as absorbed in bodily gratifications. (Compare again *Home of the Brave,* where the Negro soldier produces a package of fried chicken which he has cooked himself.) Further, the members of the family joke about the number of apple turnovers each has consumed, and another taunt of the hoodlum is implicitly justified: in the scene immediately following this one, the hoodlum calls the doctor "Little Black Sambo," and one remembers the childhood story: "And Black Mumbo ate twenty-seven pancakes . . . and Black Jumbo ate fifty-five. . . ."

There is of course no doubt of the good intentions of the makers of this film. But in order to show how wrong race hatred is, the film-makers had to create a plot and characters, and elaborate them in detailed images; here their fantasies from a less conscious level come to the surface: the Negro becomes a terrible burden that we must carry on our backs; a sacrifice of white corpses is required for his preservation; the image of the violated white woman forces its way to the screen; and so on. There is an effort to deny these unacknowledged nightmares about the Negro by locating race hatred exclusively in an exceptional, pathological character, but this attempt at denial remains, at bottom, ineffectual. The very title of the film, extremely puzzling in terms of the plot, expresses the basic ambiguity; though the Negro-hater is supposed to be defeated and the falsely accused Negro saved and vindicated, the title seems to state a deeper belief and draw a contrary "moral": there is no way out.

LETTERS FROM READERS

The "Gentile Intellectual" Again

To the Editor of Commentary:

The letters published in the September Commentary about Chandler Brossard's article, "Plaint of a Gentile Intellectual," seem to have entirely missed the point. Of course Reason is universal and Science and Art are international, knowing no barriers of race, color, or creed. Mr. Brossard certainly knows this as well as his self-righteous critics; his point was that those who traffic in Reason, Science, and Art—intellectuals—have not necessarily universalized themselves and escaped from their limited and particular social backgrounds. . . .

It depresses me that Mr. Brossard's honest attempt to record his experience should be met with such piously insulting comments: he is "provincial," he has been taken in by a bunch of "eccentric poseurs," he is not a "true" intellectual, he is "neurotic" and "immature." Everything he says must be discounted because he hasn't met the right people, the "genuine" intellectuals, who of course must exist somewhere, for all conventional liberal notions of what ought to be must have a real existence somewhere. No utopians they! Although it may offend the hygienic "liberalism" of your correspondents, it is clear that tradition and position in society do create differences between Jews and Gentiles. It is, however, the difference in the process of becoming and being an intellectual which is relevant here. Mr. Brossard's description of the plight of the Gentile intellectual isolated amid his Jewish confreres struck a responsive chord in this divided breast. . . .

To be an intellectual is to be in some way a rebel against bourgeois norms. Intellectuals may in this sense be a "community of the alienated," reflecting in their common life experiences the abstract uniformity of Reason, but the process of development is not identical for Jews, Gentiles, middle-class burghers, and decayed aristocrats. As Mr. Brossard points out, the Gentile tends to "play it straight" while the Jew constructs various images of himself, tries on for size several contrasting roles, and skitters from one to the other with remarkable versatility. He often appears to be continually showing off before his parents. The Gentile intellectual, on the other hand, is usually grimmer, narrower, less articulate, and more humorless and intense. If the Jewish intellectual is showing off to his parents, the Gentile intellectual is fighting his. The Jewish intellectual does not have to worry about backsliding: he can't go home again when home is Europe, Yiddish, the religious community, and the ghetto. He can even toy with the idea of really going home and become interested in neo-Judaist orthodoxy. But the Gentile intellectual cannot afford to compromise, for his very identity lies in continuing to struggle with his parents. He can't allow himself a closer tie with them, nor can he freely sentimentalize about his childhood in the manner of some of the "From the American Scene" pieces in Commentary.

These differences may be viewed as painful and unpleasant truths or as guarantees of the richness and diversity of American culture, but they cannot be exorcised by pious liberal platitudes.

Dennis H. Wrong

Newark, New Jersey

Psychoanalysis and Mr. Rosenberg

To the Editor of Commentary:

Harold Rosenberg ("The Psychoanalyst and the Writer," September issue) is not the only one who is upset, perplexed, and confused by the books of Dr. Edmund Bergler and Dr. Daniel E. Schneider. He and his readers would find great comfort in the number of severe criticisms (and that's an understatement) which these books have met among psychiatrists.

On the other hand, Mr. Rosenberg permits his self-defensive resentment as a writer to go too far when it takes the form of an indictment of the "sciences of humanity." Bergler and Schneider do not represent accepted psychoanalytic concepts and their publishers are not scientific publishing houses. Mr. Rosenberg can hardly blame "science" for their sins. . . .

The two authors have made a courageous attempt to invade a new *"Grenzgebiet"* between art and depth psychology. This has led them to talk about things that they (and everyone else) know little about. But the same may be said of Mr. Rosenberg's review when it comes to psychoanalysis. His pessimism about the sciences of humanity (no progress takes place in them, "the insights of the masters are also *the last truths*") and about the artist (whose confidence will be "undermined" and who will "abnegate his responsibility" because of such books as these) is more dangerous and fallacious than all the wild speculations and pretentious omniscience that any two psychoanalytic literates might get into print.

WILFRED C. HULSE

New York City

Up from Motol

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I enjoyed reading Solomon Bloom's "Autobiography of Weizmann's Zionism" [in the May COMMENTARY] for the fine analysis it contained. I thought, however, that Bloom had left some important things unsaid. . . . I think the interesting paradox is that Weizmann believed that he derived support from the fact that he came from Motol and was thoroughly at home with the East European "universe"; whereas a more important source of his support came from the fact that he symbolized the East European Jew who "made good." His life became a Horatio Alger story for Jews.

Weizmann is the transition figure in Zionist development—the bridge between the source and the ultimate fulfillment. He served that "bridge" function precisely because of the plurality of images he represented. . . . His was a complex figure, whose many sides made him so widely acceptable in so many Jewish and non-Jewish circles. His period of fulfillment is not without its pathos from this standpoint, for Weizmann is alienated from the new generation in Israel, a group that he least understands and that understands him least. Between Weizmann and Ben Gurion there were not too many miles in East Europe, but they are poles apart in social outlook and in temperament.

There is more to say about Weizmann. His position in the Jewish social scale in Eastern Europe is not too far removed from his position in English society. His arrogance about being East European is no more charitable than the arrogance traditionally ascribed to the Western Jew. And I wish Bloom could have touched more on Weizmann's social and political views, which seem to bear traces of Victorian liberalism with strong overtones of the Georgian era.

LESTER G. SELIGMAN

University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

Lakewood: Another View

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Morris Freedman's article in the September issue, "The New Farmers of Lakewood," was a rude shock. . . . I write in the hope that Mr. Freedman's errors can in some measure be corrected. . . .

Mr. Freedman makes his "sociological study" from his knowledge of twenty to thirty couples in a community whose membership encompasses upwards of three hundred Jewish families. The discussion group he dwells upon at such great length can be said to be as typical of our community as the editors of COMMENTARY are typical of editors of all Jewish publications in New York City. In general, our community is as much a cross section of New York as can be found, as regards the ambitions, spiritual values, intellectual pursuits, and psychiatric needs of its members. . . .

We do have a community center, and while its activity is not as great as it should be (partly because many of the more intellectual members do not choose to participate), we have many definite achievements to point to. Mr. Freedman fails to mention that our community . . . has one of the highest comparative records for United Jewish Appeal contributions in the land.

I feel most indignant about Mr. Freedman's giving the impression that here in Farmingdale and Lakewood exists a whole community of Jews who find the fact that they are Jews an almost irreconcilable problem, one that confuses and befuddles their whole existence. While it may be true that the discussion group has now begun to study Jewish questions, taking Sartre as a jumping-off point, many more of us in the area "jumped off" from a study of Jewish history, the Jewish and Hebrew languages and culture, and from participation in Jewish activities and organizations. There are services in the center on all the important holidays for those members who care to attend. We maintain a Sholem Aleichem Shule. Many of our people are active in Zionist organizations such as the Pioneer Women, Kadimah, and Hadassah in Lakewood; and there is a branch of the Pioneer Women which has just begun to meet in our community center. . . .

Now as to the statement that the area supports two psychiatrists. The area may very well do so, but the psychiatrists are in such large towns as Red Bank, and it is conceivable that they may get some of their patients from the urban areas. While there is a great interest in psychology and psychiatry on the part of some people, nine-tenths of us do not go around saying, "There goes Chaim the Freudian in his new Chevvy pick-up."

I have not conducted a questionnaire on the following point, but I am certain from my friendship with very many young couples here that the proportion of happy marriages to unhappy marriages will compare favorably with any similar cross section of population in the city. . . .

Sidney Boyarin

Farmingdale, New Jersey

To the Editor of Commentary:

A Morris Freedman, English teacher, has written a literary exercise on impressions he has received from a small atypical group in a large sprawling "community" of Jewish chicken farmers. And Commentary has chosen to label the article an "informal sociological study." Can it be that standards for sociological studies, formal or not, are so different fifty miles away from New York City? . . . Surely your magazine would not interpret the Jews of Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, or Mount Vernon in terms of a coterie of Greenwich Village intellectuals. (I hope my friends in the Lakewood discussion group will not assume that I am calling them Greenwich Village intellectuals.) . . .

The limited point of view Mr. Freedman presents does a great disservice to those Jews and Christians who are living together in harmony, if not necessarily in intimacy; those who do have social interchange; those who respect one another as human beings with different cultural backgrounds but identical basic drives; and those who cooperate actively in community affairs and organizations.

To say that the devotion and concern of the Jew for his children probably "epitomizes one of the factors that keep Jew and Gentile apart" is narrow, arrogant, and intolerant. I would venture to assert that those parents who transport their children to choir practice and Sunday school, to 4H clubs and Grange meetings, have not one iota less devotion to their children than do those who take theirs to the nursery school. It is true that for the most part the non-Jews have not been interested in the nursery school. Perhaps the tuition fee is one of the reasons. Be that as it may, what shall be said of the Jewish families who do not use the nursery school? A terrible anathema is in store for them—they contradict Mr. Freedman's assertion of unanimity among the Jews toward the school.

Permit me to linger a bit longer on the nursery school and its failure to attract Christians. Although no longer associated with the school, I know it well: I was its first president seven years ago. I hold now, as I did then, that a meeting of cultures is a slow process, requiring *mutual* understanding and *mutual* tolerance. If the child who attended public school classes on a Jewish holiday felt uncomfortable, so too did the Christian parent who told me, after a nursery school meeting, how embarrassed she felt from time to time. (Parenthetically, had the Jewish child's parents given her the precious gift of security in the knowledge of her own culture and roots, she might have been better equipped to deal with problems arising in her non-Jewish world.). . .

Mr. Freedman speaks of ambiguity among the farmers. (Whether he means the farmers he met or the farmers in general is indeed ambiguous.) Unfortunately he did not consider that the confusion he saw might be similar to the confusion of many Jews in many places. He did not consider the Jews he saw as an urban sophisticated group with little understanding for the rural and small-town mores of their neighbors. On the other hand, he did not see the Jews who use the Bible rather than Sartre as the starting point for their interest in religious classes. He did not see the Zionist meetings and the synagogue services. He did not see the local Kiwanis, the Lions Club, the parents-teachers associations in which Jews and Christians hold office together. . . .

Elsie A. Stroger

Farmingdale, New Jersey

Mr. Freedman Replies

To the Editor of Commentary:

My report dealt with a particular group of Lakewood farmers, a group which, as they point out, does not happen to include Mrs. Stroger and Mr. Boyarin. I think my article clearly showed why I thought this group was worthy of study. Perhaps I should have drawn the boundaries around the community I described even more specifically than it seems to me I did. At any rate, Mrs. Stroger and Mr. Boyarin confirm by their comments one of my major themes about the obvious distinctiveness of this community. I find both letters very interesting in the brief glimpses they offer of another orientation to farm life than that of the group of farmers I described.

In their excitement at not finding their own way of life described, Mrs. Stroger and Mr. Boyarin make some misstatements about my article. I nowhere suggested that Jews and Gentiles are not "living together in harmony" today, whatever that vague phrase may mean. I did not say that Gentiles did not have modern farms. "While the Jewish farmers," I wrote, "converted to central heating as soon as they could afford it, *some* of their Gentile neighbors are still getting along with a coal-burning stove and a kerosene heater." And, finally, I did point out that Jews and Gentiles serve together in Kiwanis and Rotary and parents-teachers associations.

Morris Freedman

New York City

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Report on Israel

New Star in the Near East. By Kenneth W. Bilby. Doubleday. 279 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by Ian Mikardo

Top-class newspapermen stay out of most controversies because these are usually secondary to a special preoccupation of their own. At Lake Success they can't look on the West as the heroes and the East as the villains, or vice versa; in South Africa they can't look on the Whites as the heroes and the Blacks as the villains, or vice versa; at a Davis Cup match they can't look on the holders as the heroes and the challengers as the villains, or vice versa. To a top-class newspaperman the only heroes are the men who yield up good stories and allow them to be filed, and the only villains are the strictly-off-the-record talkers and the censors. Compared with this hard, practical distinction, differences about creeds and ideologies rate with journalists as minor irrelevancies. It's the story that matters; and the journalist doesn't take sides because there's usually a story on both sides.

There's one exception to this rule, and that is the Arab-Jewish conflict in the Near East. It is a measure of the white-hot partisanship which is generated by that conflict that it has infected even the most disinterested bystanders. Every Near East correspondent was "typed" by his first dispatch: he marked himself down, willy-nilly, as either pro-Jew and anti-Arab or pro-Arab and anti-Jew. (Though, of course, after Hitler, people never admitted to being anti-Jew: they said "I'm pro-Jewish but anti-Zionist." That's how Ernest Bevin put it to me in a private quarrel we once had, though he said it much too vehemently to carry conviction.)

But let us return to our Near Eastern journalists. They all became, as I've said, infected with the partisanship of the Arab-Jewish conflict. Every one of them saw in the forefront of his vision either the manifest justice of the Jewish cause or the manifest justice of the Arab cause. That was inevitable in a conflict which wasn't between a right and a wrong, but between one right and another right. It was inevitable; but it meant inescapably that objective reporting and uncolored appraisals of the Near Eastern scene were hard to come by.

It is this gap which Mr. Kenneth Bilby's book is designed to fill, and the attempt, to my mind, is very largely successful. It isn't that Mr. Bilby writes as a lily-white neutral: if he did his book would be dull, and it is anything but that. It's possible, when you read *New Star in the Near East*, to discover on which side the author's sympathies are engaged, but in order to do it you have to read the book as you would read an Ellery Queen, looking all the while for clues hidden between the lines. Mr. Bilby has a heart, but he doesn't wear it on his sleeve.

Appointed Near East correspondent of the New York *Herald Tribune*, Mr. Bilby arrived in Palestine just in time to see Palestine disappear in the wake of the departing British soldiers and to witness the birth of Israel in its place. For two years, in peace and then war and then peace again, he went up and down from Dan to Beersheba, and occasionally beyond into the succession states of the old Ottoman Empire, talking and listening to all sorts and conditions of men. He never examined without also cross-examining, he never (except once or twice, as he ruefully confesses) accepted a story without tracking it down to the roots, he never pronounced a verdict after hearing only one side of the evidence. He absorbed propaganda from both sides, and filtered it through a trained and skeptical mind; he marched with the Haganah and he marched with the Arab Legion; he wept for the Jewish refugees in Pardess Hanna and he wept for the Arab refugees in Ramallah. And all the while he kept not merely a carefully selective eye (which every good journalist has) for the events that made history, but also a carefully selective ear (which few people have) for the opinions that made good sense.

Some of the things that Mr. Bilby notes are already too painfully familiar. It didn't take him long to discover that in the Arab-Jewish conflict the British were always neutral on the side of the Arabs. It didn't take him long to learn the first lesson of power politics—one that will apply in Korea, too—which is that "only the status quo counts. You govern where your soldiers stand." He was quick to assess the "incredible" nature of Israel's victories in battle, and to understand to what extent they were due to a highly efficient intelligence service. "I firmly believe," says Mr. Bilby, "that the American and British armies could take lessons today from Israel in the field of securing information of enemy capabilities and intentions." (General MacArthur please note.)

There are some incisive personal portraits in this book, and three salutary pieces of debunking. The egregious Brigadier Glubb Pasha is debunked as a sort of Alexander the Little sitting in Amman biting his nails and rationalizing his failures, and complaining about the American government, and being particularly hurt that the British war minister was a Jew. Then there is a debunking of the myth that everybody wants Jerusalem because it contains the holy places. Mr. Bilby's judgment is that "the shrines are of secondary importance when compared with prestige, national interest, property holdings and military strategy." He doesn't add, though he might have done, that nobody seems to bother much about the holy places of Bethlehem and Nazareth, perhaps because they're holy and not also strategic.

The new State of Israel, too, comes in for its share of debunking from Mr. Bilby's pen. "It must," he says, and this entirely confirms my own impressions, "take the chip off its shoulder, cut down its swagger a bit, and stop playing the role of infant prodigy." And, I would add, it must learn to laugh at itself once in a while.

HERE, then, is a book which is full of sound judgments soundly analyzed and exciting events excitingly recounted. It carries the reader from page to page with the momentum of constantly sustained interest. And yet it leaves one dissatisfied at the end.

That is because the author, after correctly evaluating the three fundamental questions which hang over the new State of Israel, fails to lead the reader towards a clear-cut answer to them. These three questions are: (1) Will there be a "second round" renewal of the war? (2) Can Israel survive economically? And in particular (3), can the economy of Israel be adjusted to the strain of unrestricted immigration?

Mr. Bilby devotes a whole chapter to the balance between the Arabs' desire for revenge and their inability to create a united and effective fighting force, but at the end of it he is no nearer a judgment on the subject than he was at the beginning. On the economic position of Israel he seems to share the blind, almost mystical faith of most Israelis that somehow or other it will all come right in the end. The hard facts of the economic ledger—shortage of indigenous raw materials, low levels of industrial skills and productivity, abnormal investment needs, chronic adverse balance on external account—are discounted in favor of "a hardheaded mysticism" and "the powerful strain of emotional conviction of the nation's destiny which courses through every facet of public and private life." This is picturesque, and even magnificent, but it's not economics and it's not common sense.

There's the same unwillingness to face the realities of unrestricted immigration. The key to this problem, which Mr. Bilby has missed, is the balance between the long-term security of numbers and the short-term weakness of hungry mouths with (at least temporarily) unproductive hands. Mr. Bilby suggests a compromise, but it is one that begs the question.

But these are inconsiderable blemishes in a book with many merits. Those who are already interested in the Near Eastern scene will find this book, as I did, informative and stimulating; and those who come fresh to the subject could wish for no better guide to the involved political contours of one of the most inflammable areas of the earth's terrain.

The Synagogues of New York

YIDN DAVENEN ("Jews Pray"). By SHLOMO BICKEL. Published by R. J. Novak. 201 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR HERTZBERG

PERETZ tells the story of Berel the tailor who struggled for years to keep his son at medical studies in a German university. One Friday the young man returned home, having by then become quite the intellectual "Herr Doktor." The next morning, on the Sabbath, Berel asked his son to go with him to the synagogue to pray. The son refused and proceeded to advance philosophical arguments as to why prayer is unnecessary and even ludicrous.

"Father," he asked, "you believe, don't you,

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that God is greater and more righteous than you?"

"Well, of course," Berel answered, "about that there's no question."

"Well then, you're a tailor. What would you feel if a group of people stood outside your window and chanted 'great tailor, wonderful tailor, magnificent tailor, greatest tailor in all the world,' and so on?"

"I'd feel foolish."

"Of course," said the son. "Then why make God uncomfortable? Doesn't He know His own greatness?"

"Yes, maybe you're right," Berel answered thoughtfully, "but how about when a man's in trouble?"

"Well, Father, you think you're a righteous man. If you knew that a poor widow down the street was hungry would you wait to be asked for help? Would you need reminding?"

"Of course not, I'd go right away and try to help her."

"That's right," the son argued. "Why then remind God of our needs? Doesn't He, the All-powerful and Compassionate, know them without our outcries?"

Berel felt himself defeated in the argument. He pondered for a moment, and then burst out: *"Ober davenen darf man doch!"*—"Still—you've got to pray!"

THE young intellectual of Peretz's story, if he is alive at all, is by now three or four decades older and himself the father of a grown son. He has gone through two world wars and the destruction of the Eastern European milieu. Indeed, except for a few minor discrepancies, he might possibly be Shlomo Bickel; at any rate Bickel's *Yidn Davenen* provides a contemporary continuation of Peretz's story.

Bickel went forth on his tour of the synagogues of New York in quest of the God of his fathers, of Him who was so immediate a reality in the *Hasidim-shtibel* of Reb Itzikel in the Kolomaye of his youth. He was looking for counterparts of his priestly and patriarchal grandfathers, to whose memory the book is dedicated, in order to rediscover the faith and strength with which to be a father to his own son, then fighting with the American army. He sought to find synagogues where he could cease being a spectator or critic and where he could pray as in his youth, as part of the congregation. Occasionally he succeeded, but for the most part he did not.

This series of reports on Bickel's sentimental journey would be of no great importance if it could merely be summed up by Thomas Wolfe's phrase: "You can't go home again." But this short book is more than a nostalgic seeking for a world gone by; it is the best picture known to this reviewer of what has been transplanted of old-world Hasidic life to New York City, and from that angle it also asks the sharp and pertinent question: Of what religious value are the pink-tea, modernized, "Americanized" surrogates for the ancestral faith?

In his search for Kolomaye on East Broadway or in Brooklyn, Bickel does not allow sentiment to cloud his basic judgments. The late Lubavitcher *rebbe,* in his dim-lit chamber in a house on busy Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, speaking with deep and almost eerie faith of the near advent of the Messiah, moves him greatly. The sound at the East Side's leading Hasidic synagogue of the Riglitzer *rebbe* pronouncing the benedictions over the Torah in the almost majestic accents of the East European *rov* comes through to him as a pure bit of the old piety. He repeats with joy what he was told about a "deal" between the *rebbe* of Lashkowitz and the fifteen-year-old son of the neighboring butcher—the youngster agreed to read the Torah for the congregation at the Sabbath morning service in return for study sessions with the *rebbe* in the Zohar, the classical text of Jewish mysticism. On the other hand there is the commercialized smugness of the *gabbai* (a sort of private secretary and financial agent) at the "court" of one *rebbe* who is pleased with the thriving "trade" in adherents who come to see the *rebbe* and incidentally take occasion to contribute to his support. Bickel is far from sure that the young people even of those deeply Hasidic circles will remain firmly wedded to that tradition. After all, are a few small centers capable of withstanding the attractions and attritions of New York?

Bickel therefore looks for more "Americanized" synagogues which have translated and shall translate the mood of Kolomaye to our time. He finds almost nothing that appears to him of value. It would be shallow to shrug off his reaction as that of one so in love with the past that he is unable to appreciate a valid 20th-century Judaism, for he is capable of being inspired by a new synagogue and even by a rabbi without a beard. Indeed, Bickel concludes his account of a Sabbath with Orthodox German Jews in upper Manhattan by expressing his gratitude for the moving faith of their modern young *rabbiner,* in whom he sees a valid 20th-century version of the old rabbi of Kolomaye. The traditionalism and dignity of the Spanish-Portuguese congregation evoke his respect. He ironizes a bit at the expense of Temple Emanu-El, where he imagines an invisible emblem bearing the motto "Reasonableness and Cool Common Sense"; and yet the rabbi's sermon, on the occasion of Purim, is to Bickel a heartening affirmation of an important value. In the plea from the pulpit for a renewal of the will to preserve the international community of Jews he hears the accents of survivalism and finds them good. Bickel is even more negative in his reaction to a Bar Mitzvah at a Conservative synagogue in Forest Hills, and yet even from his satire at the all-too-decorous congregation, with its well-trained adeptness in community singing and responsive reading, there emerges the picture of a synagogue in which its individual members have been taught to become again, in a new way, part of the ritual.

For the most part, however, Bickel misses in the American synagogue the most important of all religious motifs, the feeling of the personal commitment of the individual to God, and his outcry can barely be denied:

"When my grandfather helped me put on the *tefillin* one Wednesday after Shevuoth and, with tears in his eyes, tightened its leather thong on my hand, it still seems to me today that with every pull he was saying: 'Don't depend, my grandson, on the cantor's chant at prayers. Now you have to climb on your own towards God, with your own strength and on your own responsibility.' . . . The ritual of the somewhat reformed temple is not, it seems to me, able to make of the thirteen-year-old boys independent Bar Mitzvahs. It merely stimulates them to become disciplined soldiers in the rabbi's temple army."

The American synagogue is a stronghold of group-survivalist sentiment and, insofar as it is effective in its own way, a highly institutionalized form of group expression. These are the instruments of continued vitality, but instruments have meaning only in terms of a purpose and an act of will. In Kolomaye that purpose was the service of the living God, who beyond doubt was the master of the destiny of each Jew. When the son of Berel the tailor has felt the emptiness of his own agnosticism, it is only to such a God that he can turn. He cannot make

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a deity out of his attachment to the Jewish national ethos, social liberalism, and ethical decency, for those were precisely the values that he held when he saw no point to going to synagogue with Berel a long time ago.

The defenders of agnosticism and liberal theology may hurl the epithets "failure of nerve," "retreat from reason," "search for a father image," "infantile regression," and the like, and yet the Jew once could at least defend himself in troubled times by reciting the Psalms, pouring out his woe before an open ark, and dreaming of miracles yet to come. Small comforts these, many may say, but are they really? They are the primary stuff of the dialogue between man and God, a dialogue which is all too muted in the formal devotions of the modern synagogue. They speak in the accents of personal faith, an accent so much truer to the nature of religion than synagogue membership out of group loyalty, family sentiment, or *noblesse oblige*. This is reactionary doctrine—but where have the religious liberals led us?

Into the Trees and Out of Sight

ACROSS THE RIVER AND INTO THE TREES. By ERNEST HEMINGWAY. Scribner's. 308 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by PHILIP RAHV

THE first thing to be said about this novel is that it is so egregiously bad as to render all comment on it positively embarrassing to anyone who esteems Hemingway as one of the more considerable prose-artists of our time and as the author of some of the finest short stories in the language. Hence the disappointment induced by this latest work of his, a work manifestly composed in a state of distemper, if not actual demoralization.

This novel reads like a parody by the author of his own manner—a parody so biting that it virtually destroys the mixed social and literary legend of Hemingway that has now endured for nearly three decades. For it can be said that not since the days of Dickens and later of Mark Twain has a writer of fiction in English succeeded in beguiling and captivating his readers to the extent that Hemingway did; and his success had a quality of ease and naturalness that was essentially exhilarating. In this latest book, however, the legend suffers irremediable damage. Here he really goes too far in the exploitation of it, indulging himself in blatant self-pity and equally blatant conceit, with the result that certain faults of personality, and the moral and intellectual immaturity which he was never able to overcome but which heretofore, in the greater part of his creative work, he managed to sublimate with genuine artistry, now come through as ruling elements, forcing the reader to react to Hemingway the man rather than to Hemingway the artist. And the man in Hemingway—in his literary appearances at any rate—has nearly always struck one as the parasitical double of the artist in him.

This cleavage between man and artist was long ago perceived by his more acute critics. Thus Lionel Trilling has observed that the artist in Hemingway is at once conscious and possessed of a kind of innocence while the man is self-conscious and naive; and Edmund Wilson has remarked that "something frightful seems to happen to Hemingway as soon as he begins to write in his own person. In his fiction, the conflicting elements of his personality, the emotional situations that obsess him, are externalized and objectified; and the result is an art which is severe, intense, and deeply serious. But as soon as he talks in his own person he seems to lose all his capacity for self-criticism and is likely to become fatuous or maudlin." Now though this new narrative is written not in the first person but in the fictional third person, still it is precisely the element of the fatuous and the maudlin that predominates in it. The explanation for that lies, I think, in the insecure division between man and artist in Hemingway. The strain of sustaining it has been obviously getting him down and the artist has been gradually giving way to the man.

THAT this was the case was already becoming apparent in certain sections of *To Have and Have Not,* a poor novel on the whole, whose protagonist, Harry Morgan, was presented, in a manner unmistakably and disagreeably subjective, as a kind of totem of sexual virility; the infantile nature of the fantasy was plain and so was the sub-literary effect. Then one came upon the same sort of thing in parts of *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* particularly in the parts celebrating the love-making of Robert Jordan and Maria; and in *Across the River and into the Trees* the personal brag and splutter is even more jarring, for here the artist appears to have been entirely displaced by the man. The fact is that there is hardly any aesthetic distance between the author and Colonel Richard Cantwell, the hero of the novel. They have so much in common, in their private history and war experience no less than in their opinions, tastes, attitudes, and prejudices, that there is no telling them apart. Thus the author intrudes everywhere, violating the most elementary specifications that make for verisimilitude in a work of fiction. For example, why is this colonel of the regular U. S. Army, who on the face of it is no great shakes as a worldly character, treated in the luxurious Venice hotels and bars with the minute deference usually reserved for the celebrities of international café society? As for the obsessive consumption of food and liquor, especially liquor, and the pride taken in the knowledge and selection of them, that certainly belongs to the more recent versions of the Hemingway legend; it is wholly unconvincing, however, as an integral part of the characterization of an army officer of the type of Colonel Cantwell. These may be small details, to be sure, but they point to an identification of author and hero disruptive of the primary and indispensable aesthetic illusion.

The time-span of the story is three days, the scene is Venice and the Adriatic countryside, and the action consists of a duck-shoot, which is far and away the best bit in the book, and, for the rest, of prolonged love passages between the Colonel and his girl, the nineteen-year-old Countess Renata, who is not a recognizable human being at all but a narcissistically constructed love-object. She is even less credible than Maria of the Spanish novel. Both belong to the tradition of the adoring and submissive Hemingway girls, a type that has been getting more and more adoring and submissive as the years pass. Renata, the latest incarnation, is purely the most unreal of the lot, wholly the product of an adolescent revery of irresistible mastery and perfection of experience in love. The ritualistic love-talk between the Colonel and this girl is of an indescribable tediousness, and the way in which he introduces his war memories into this talk is structurally so artificial as to deprive the recalled experience of the authority it implicitly lays claim to. The war scenes evoked in this book come off very badly in comparison with the actual representation of war in *A Farewell to Arms* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. What is missing here is "the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion," as Hemingway once put it

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The stated themes of love and death are unrealized in this novel. The Colonel dies of heart disease as the action ends, but we are prepared for his death only factually, not imaginatively. It is an occurrence, nothing more, devoid of expressive implications, since the story turns on no significant principle of honor or valor or compassion such as invested some of Hemingway's earlier narratives with value and meaning. This could not but happen once the author became involved with his hero in exactly the wrong way, shifting from the role of creator to that of devotee pure and simple. He is unaware, or only dimly aware, of his hero's vanity and brutality and of the ugly competitiveness exhibited in his relationship to other human beings. There can be no evaluation of character or behavior in such a context, and no intelligible meaning to the action.

It is true, of course, that Hemingway has always been more closely involved with his hero than most novelists. The relation in which he stood to him, however, was not that of literal and helpless identification but that of the ego to the ego-ideal. Seeking to "find himself" in this leading character, he endowed him with all the qualities he considered admirable; and the world into which he turned him loose to do or die, though real enough, was nonetheless specially selected and ordered so as to provide him with the conditions he needed for self-fulfillment; and these were conditions of relative freedom from normal circumstances and routine compulsions; for it is only within the special ambience of combat and virile sports that he performed his part, discovering the fate that awaited him. It seems to me that a good many qualities of Hemingway's prose are accounted for by this disengagement of his hero and his typical situation from the thick coils of environment, from its confusion of objects and facts. It certainly helped Hemingway to form a style of unusual lightness and freshness, but it did not make him a novelist of the first rank. There is a certain kind of freedom which the greater novelists cannot afford and do not care to solicit. Still, the fact that the binding agent of Hemingway's work was the personality of his hero, who alone held sway and in whom all the compositional elements were merged, made for a unity and concreteness of effect matched by very few of his contemporaries. But within this creative process there always lurked the danger of a possible merger between ego and ego-ideal that would disrupt the delicate balance allowing the author to live through his leading character imaginatively while standing apart from him as a man. That this balance has been lost is now evident. Colonel Cantwell is not Hemingway's ego-ideal, like Jake Barnes and Lieutenant Henry; he is the ego-ideal taken as achieved and absorbed into the ego of Hemingway, who is thus turned into his own complete ego-ideal. It is greatly to be hoped that in his future work the man recedes and the artist regains control.

A Rabbi, New Style

STAR OF GLASS. By ANN BIRSTEIN. Dodd, Mead. 273 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by MIDGE DECTER

ONE thing that has emerged from the recent swarm of nostalgia-novels and memoirs, supposedly depicting Jewish life in America as the author saw or sees it, is a typology of the American rabbi. Two categories for this typology have thus far been definitely established: the rabbi with beard and the rabbi with yellowed fingers. The rabbi with beard is sage, venerable, bursting at the seams with quotations from *Perek* ("The Ethics of the Fathers"), and says "Pfui!" to the insanity of the new life around him. The rabbi with yellowed fingers is perhaps more formidable, but no more complex. He chain-smokes, is careless about his personal cleanliness, and, waving a nasty, crooked, yellowed finger, preaches hell-fire and damnation to the erring, thereby warping the lives of countless tortured heroes. The former is generally considered to inhabit the Lower East Side; the latter, Williamsburg.

Why it is that these novels have never succeeded in getting any further is readily understandable. American Jews till now can be credited with a notable lack of insight into their crazy-quilt background—and for any but the truly gifted artist in such a situation it is impossible to remember or perceive in any way but that dictated by current literary convention. (Otherwise, for instance, how inexplicable would be the stories and discussions of the "alienated Jewish intellectuals." That such a richly variegated amalgam of communities as that of the European Jews settling, all in a lump, in America could produce in the most insightful among us, the intellectuals, such a patterned memory, such a neat problem!)

It has remained, then, for a young girl to create the first useful category in the typology of the rabbi—useful, that is, for an understanding of American Jewish life; we should call it, perhaps, the rabbi with ulcers. Admittedly, this creation foreshadows no consummate art, but it is something anyway.

Jacob Wax (the *yunger, moderner rov* of the congregational want-ads in the Yiddish dailies), the hero of *Star of Glass,* and his hybrid Orthodox synagogue, have been given their first clean sketching. And I do not hesitate to predict that many, even those who recognize the sentimental weakness—affectionate or spiteful—of previous portraiture, will not like it. For this is not the rabbi and not the synagogue of our golden youth or of our black youth, as the case may be; it is the synagogue and the rabbi who advertise the "strictly kosher Jewish wedding." And these "strictly kosher Jewish weddings" are, after all, rather mundane affairs.

STAR OF GLASS is a strangely unexpected book, and it took this reviewer a long time to realize that its power to be disturbing comes from a curious misalignment of the author's sympathies and intentions in relation to what she has actually achieved in the novel. That is, Miss Birstein really identifies, and expects the reader to identify, with her heroine and all the other "good people," sharing their perspective on the "bad people"—while whatever impact the novel had, in my case at least, lay precisely in my rejection of her point of view. For the sympathetic characters are all silly, and the nasty ones are flesh and blood: Rabbi Wax, the author's villain, is really no villain; the simple heroine (his secretary, Fay) is just as ridiculous as she appears to her boss—one even sympathizes with Fay's flamboyant, gold-toothed mother in her anxiety to get Fay away from the synagogue and married off to Seymour Garfinkel, the boy in his papa's business. And Mr. and Mrs. Polarfsky, the old Jews of culture, taste, and learning, charming and on the side of right always, annoyed me as much as they did their rabbi, though perhaps for different reasons. I, too, should have said to Mr. Polarfsky with Jacob Wax: "Go study your Talmud and tend to your beard, old man." True, I should have said it to the old man because Jews of culture, taste, and learning have nothing to do with the new synagogue of the "strictly kosher Jewish wedding," because he had no right to be around in the first place.

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The rabbi, according to the author, did not say it for these reasons. But, one feels, he would have, had not Miss Birstein intervened.

Miss Birstein obviously considers herself a novelist, not a sociologist. But her simple tale, simply told, of a girl and her mother and her boy friend and her boss and her job and her new-found faith, etc., etc., does not come off in any real sense. And this is a crucial shortcoming-turned-virtue. For what we are left with is what Miss Birstein might never have achieved in "the great American Jewish novel": namely, as I said before, a new type of rabbi for fiction, and an honest type. A harassed rabbi, beset with financial problems, trying desperately to think up new schemes, new "techniques" to keep his membership, impatient with sanctimonious talk (reserved for old Talmudists and, I suppose, book reviewers) about "Jewish values" which have long since ceased to play any role in his kind of synagogue, worried about the "effect" of his sermons—though meaning every word of them. A rabbi with a *shlemiel* of a brother and a silly, grousing *rebbitsen.*

It is a relief at last to think of a rabbi in the real context of his failing Hebrew school, his weakling brother, his nagging wife. In short, to think of him *personally.* And it is a sad comment on the state of American Jewish writing that we can only get the personal picture as cast in a new type.

I SHOULD like to make just one more comment. Miss Birstein's *rebbitsen* is a curious figure, and a pathetic one. She feels herself chained to her house and housework. She is, socially, terribly awkward. (She is heard to say at the Seder table: "She wouldn't have to cook for strangers like I do." And then turning to her guests: "No offense intended.") I questioned the authenticity of such a *rebbitsen* to many of my friends. After all, we know so well that a *rebbitsen,* always in the community eye, must exist almost entirely on a public, social level. At least, this is the hue and cry of all my *rebbitsen* acquaintances. However awkward, I thought, she would *have* to do better than that. But they assured me I am wrong and Miss Birstein is right. If so, it would be most useful, it seems to me, if Miss Birstein's next offering could be a portrait of a *rebbitsen.* She has not, in the literature so far, fared even so well as her maligned spouse.

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The Problems of Morale

THE NEGRO'S MORALE: GROUP IDENTIFICATION AND PROTEST. By ARNOLD M. ROSE. The University of Minnesota Press. 152 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by MIRIAM REIMANN

THE Commission on Community Interrelations of the American Jewish Congress, which has been studying Jewish group morale, decided that studies in the group morale of other minority groups would be helpful, and asked Professor Rose to consider the group morale of the American Negro. This book is the outcome of his study. Professor Rose uses the terms "group morale" and "group identification" more or less synonymously, and considers group morale to be compounded of group pride and group protest—pride in tradition and in individual and group successes, and protest against suppression, discrimination, and prejudice.

The Negro's Morale takes up the growth of group identification among American Negroes from before the Civil War, the obstacles in its way, the instruments for its promotion (the press, for example), relations with other subordinate groups (especially the Jews), and the future effects of Negro group identification on intergroup relations. As the author points out, group morale is a phase of the Negro problem almost entirely ignored up to now.

Professor Rose's major premise is that group morale is both a determinant and a by-product of group status. While under the most extreme conditions of suppression—slavery—no coherent group pride and no effective group protest were possible, the reduction of suppression and discrimination has strengthened Negro group morale. And with additional successes of the movement to remove Negro disabilities, we can expect heightened group morale in the future: ". . . discrimination will decrease slowly and prejudice even more slowly. In that case . . . the trend toward an increasing group identification would persist. Negroes would become welded in a much more group-conscious and effectively organized group. Although the discrimination which promotes the protest would decrease, the protest itself would increase as Negroes achieved a better position from which to protest. This might almost be said to be one of the unhappy laws of social relations. . . ."

Professor Rose, by articulating this "unhappy law," raises a number of serious questions concerning the future of American minorities. Professor Rose explains, for example, that Negroes demand of individual Negroes, and especially of Negro leaders, that they never place full confidence in a white man or a white organization; that they do not pass as whites even when that is physically possible; that, in short, their pride in their own group be in some way demonstrated by rejecting the other. Such demands evidence, in Professor Rose's terms, high group morale; they were not made as strongly as they are today, says Professor Rose, in the decades 1880 to 1910, when morale was very low. As the group status is improved, we thus find the "minority" excluding and rejecting the "majority" (including other "minorities") with a vigor equaled only by its demand for full acceptance.

Increasing majority acceptance and increasing minority group morale, Professor Rose's two goals, would thus seem to be compatible trends only within limits. Even today, when Negroes are far short of full equality, what are considered to be necessary accompaniments of high group morale—extreme group pride, sensitivity, defense against assimilation, political coherence —may well serve to block rather than advance group status. And the same is true for other American "minorities."

There have always been minority leaders who would not agree with Professor Rose that the position of the minority is to any great degree determined by Negro assertiveness, and who consequently could consistently play down the importance of the Negro psychologically arming himself by heightened group morale. In the Booker T. Washington "surrender" period, the Negroes, abandoning group protest, relied upon the good will and the less frequent good efforts of their white friends. Washington and most other Negro leaders of the time underplayed the importance of a group morale that expressed itself in protest; while minority leaders at the present time, quite on the other side, fail to recognize the subtle but serious difficulties that an extreme group morale imposes upon full group acceptance.

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Negroes—in contradistinction, say, to Jews—neither are nor wish to be in any way different from other Americans, culturally, nationally, or religiously, and only possess a racial difference. For this reason, many have argued that full equality must for Negroes imply a total loss of group identity, eventually—for the only meaning of that identity is to fight inequality. As Professor Rose suggests, this would involve loss of personal status for many individual Negro leaders, Negroes who have succeeded in a small way by white standards as professionals and businessmen. Such individuals probably tend to defend the coherence of the group more than those who are less successful, and they tend to neglect the difficulties imposed upon the group by extreme group pride.

Group pride is thus ambiguous in its social role. Even its psychological meaning is not clear-cut and unequivocal. For I do not think, as Professor Rose argues, that group self-hatred is the simple opposite of group pride: it is rather a very important part of it. Among Negro—and Jewish—school children, it has been found, those who recognize their minority status most clearly are also those who feel most ashamed of the low status of their group: in them "group pride" and "self-hatred" seem inextricably mixed.

"'Group pride" or "group morale" is therefore a more complicated matter than one might imagine from Professor Rose's schematizations. The book, however, is a good opening for a discussion of some crucial questions.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Ian Mikardo is a Labor member of Parliament with a special interest in Near Eastern affairs.

Arthur Hertzberg is rabbi of the West End Synagogue in Nashville, Tennessee.

Philip Rahv, an editor of *Partisan Review,* is author of *Image and Idea,* a book of essays.

Midge Decter studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and is at present working on a long study of literary trends in American Jewish fiction.

Miriam Reimann has taken part in various projects for the study of prejudice and social attitudes.

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